

RUSSIA'S PROTESTATIONS AND POLICY.

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P R E F A C E.

The foregoing articles have been reprinted from the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, in which they appeared during the latter part of last year. They contain information not now readily accessible; and it is hoped that they will serve to expose the real source of danger to the world's peace.

January, 1904.

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Russia's Protestations and Policy.

I.—THE GREAT PEACE STATE.

Russia has frequently been likened to a huge octopus, which, disarming suspicion by its calm patience, lies quietly in wait for its prey, and, at the opportune moment, thrusts out its tentacles, clutches what it may, digests what it can, mangles the rest with its cruel bill, and then conceals its proceedings by the emission of a cloud of inky and impenetrable blackness. The comparison is not inapt. But we prefer to think of Russia as a vast glacier, moving almost imperceptibly, in various directions, along the lines of least resistance, checked now and then by natural or artificial barriers, but sooner or later overcoming all obstacles, destroying everything as she advances and leaving behind her wide and desolate moraines composed of the debris of the human liberty she has wrecked and of the civilisations she has overthrown. This has been her history from the time when the Dukes of Muscovy, having defeated their ancient enemies the Poles, cast about for means of aggrandising themselves; and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that nearly every important Treaty of modern date has had amongst its primary objects the imposition of some curb on the progress of this tremendous political icefield.

Not to go too far back into the dim vista of things that have been, we find Russia tempting the Greeks to rebellion, in order to weaken Turkey, and then leaving them in the lurch. We find her stipulating for and obtaining the cession of Finland, with the aim, in due season, of abolishing the constitution of that unhappy province and, next, of attacking, through it, the free and enlightened communities of Norway and Sweden. We find her helping an alien despotism to suppress the freedom of Hungary, for ages the bulwark of western civilisation against the successive storms of Asiatic barbarism. We find her effecting by slow degrees the partition of Poland, urged thereto by insatiable ambition, but also by jealousy, bred of a recognition of the fact that the Poles possessed in great measure that culture to which she herself pretends, but to which she has never been able to attain. We find her stirring up strife and bloodshed in the European provinces of Turkey and "liberating" Turkish provinces in order that she may afterwards keep them in a condition of turmoil, weaken them, and absorb them, when that process shall appear safe. We see her employing as her instruments to that end the dagger of the assassin and the bomb of the dynamite conspirator. We see her playing her game there before the eyes of the world. We find her, when her own

arms are unavailing against Turkish gallantry, summon the aid of Roumania: and, when that little state had accomplished what the hordes of the Tsardom could not, we find her rewarding her ally by filching from him a slice of his territory. We find her spreading fire and the sword to the east of her, and gradually passing those deserts and wildernesses an inspection of which, on a reasonably large map, ought, in the judgment of the late Lord Salisbury, to have satisfied any sane Englishman to the utter impossibility of her ever approaching dangerously close to our Indian frontier. We find her establishing herself on the borders of the territory of our ally the Ameer of Afghanistan, and threatening him with the despatch to Kabul of an envoy who could act in no other capacity than that of an intriguer. We find her incessantly plotting in Persia, employing her Church, as usual where that course is deemed expedient, as her lieutenant, converting the Shah's Nestorian subjects to Orthodoxy *en bloc*, and stationing a warship in the Persian Gulf to protect commercial interests which are absolutely non-existent. We find her directing an assault against the ancient civilisation of China, and fomenting a war between China and Japan with the object of weakening both, so that her task shall be rendered the easier when the moment for its execution shall arrive. And now we behold her seeking to wreck the liberties and civilisation of Japan, a young, progressive, and constitutional country, the hope of the Asian races, and, therefore, other considerations apart, entitled to Russian hatred and to Russian hostility.

The foregoing is but a greatly abbreviated summary of the well-nigh interminable chapter of Russian crime. It could be prolonged indefinitely. More or less of it is well known to every educated person. And yet, somehow or other, Russia has friends, and even apologists and advocates, everywhere. She takes care to have them. It is one of the aims of her subtle diplomacy to create them. Exteriorly, at any rate, her agents are polished and refined; or, if not that, they are interesting—men (or women) with a past, political or otherwise. If a man (or woman) is not personally agreeable, then he (or she) is engaging on other grounds. In either case, the Russian agent experiences no difficulty in forming an entourage; and that entourage is certain to be Russophile. It may happen however—in China, for example—that personal qualities or associations count for less than wealth or liberality in the disposal of it. In that event the rouble is spent liberally. The Russian Exchequer is notoriously embarrassed. Yet it always contains money enough and to spare for the advancement of Russia's "world mission." Russia is before all things adaptable. She can accommodate herself to circumstances, whatever they may be; and it is easy for one of her agents—to cite an instance which has actually occurred—to transfer himself from Liverpool to Peking, and be as much at home in the one as in the other. In her dealings with the West, Russia is peculiarly happy. The East understands

Russia. If she gets more or less of her own way there, she has to pay for it. But the West is guileless. As it accepts a man at his own price, so it accepts a nation. And Russia's price is so high that she finds it easy to appear respectable in the eyes of the respectable people. The Western world was quite startled when, shortly before the Blagovestchensk massacre, perhaps the most brutal on record, the Tsar published what has been called his Peace Manifesto. But there is nothing novel in a manœuvre of that kind on the part of Russia. She has always posed as the apostle of peace, just as she has always posed as the apostle of humanity; and the imposture has always succeeded with the Peace parties and with the "pure humanitarians," to borrow Count Goluchowsky's phrase, of the Western nations. We pointed this out when the manifesto was issued. The trick is, in truth, entitled to respect only by reason of its antiquity. There may not nowadays be many people prepared to say off-hand what the Holy Alliance was. Let us quote its preamble, and those who remember the diplomatic prelude to the Blagovestchensk slaughter will then have no difficulty in appreciating its significance so far as Russia is concerned. "In the name of the most Holy and Indivisible Trinity," ran this historic document, "their Majesties the Emperor of Austria, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor of Russia"—modest Emperor of Russia!—"in consequence of the grand events which have signalised in Europe the course of the past three years, and more especially in consequence of the multiplied benefits which it has pleased Divine Providence to shed upon their States, whose Governments have placed their confidence and hope in Him alone, having attained the intimate conviction that it is necessary to base the plan to be adopted by the Powers, in their mutual relations, upon the sublime truths taught us by the eternal religion of our God and Saviour, declare solemnly that the present Act has no other object than to manifest, in the face of the Universe, their unshakable determination to take no other rules for their conduct, whether in the administration of their respective States, or in their political relations with every other Government, than the precepts of this holy religion—precepts of justice, of charity, and of peace, which far from being applicable solely to private life, should, on the contrary, directly influence the resolutions of Princes, and guide all their steps as being the sole means of consolidating human institutions and remedying their imperfections." A good deal of Russian history was made between 1815 and 1875. Yet Baron Jomini repeated this declaration at the Brussels Congress of the latter date. To-day that declaration would appear ridiculous, we should imagine, even in Exeter Hall eyes. But it swindled the pietists of this period. No less godly a body than the Peace Society of Massachusetts, composed of descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers, was amongst the first to congratulate the Emperor Alexander on the formation of the Holy League of the Three Sovereigns.*

II -THE GREAT GUARDIAN STATE.

Russia, we say, always takes care to appear respectable in the eyes of respectable people. She knows that they are guided, not by conduct, but by protestations, that they judge a man, not by what he is, but by what he says he is, not by what he does, but by what he says he means to do; and she knows, further, that they believe almost everything that they see in print. Wherefore Russia, which muzzles her own newspapers to the verge of suffocation, utilizes to the full the press abroad. She has her organs in Paris, in Brussels, and in most, if not all, the principal European centres.

RUSSIAN CLAIMS

Here is an extract from a popular English periodical. Of the author's nationality we are ignorant, nor do we know where he gathered his information: but of this there can be no doubt that he represents Russia as she would have herself represented to the nations of Europe. "Russia," we are told, "is the largest of the European Powers, and the strongest: and has for centuries been the guardian of Europe against the infidel. Upon its border the full horrors of Asiatic conquest have burst again and again, and there was a time when every Tartar considered the Muscovite as his slave. But the storm of Tartar savagery spent itself on Russia, and thus Europe was saved. When the Russians had once thrown off the Tartar yoke, they entered on another mission against the Turk. And it is fairly true to say that there is not a Freeman between the Pruth and the Adriatic to-day who does not owe his freedom mainly to Russia. Her great writers, such as Turgenieff, delight the civilised world as much as her painters Gay and Verestchagin and her musicians Rubinstein and Paderowski, and in Count Tolstoi she possesses the only real prophet of the present age."

PLAIN CONTRADICTIONS.

Here is a pretty catalogue of claims to righteousness. If only these assertions were true, how different a Europe we should be living in to-day! But they are not true. Every one of them may be contradicted with the utmost confidence, and in the plainest of language. Russia is not the strongest of the European Powers. If she were, Europe would now be Cossack, as Napoleon predicted it would be if it did not become French. The Turk proved too much

for Russia in her last attack upon Islam; and the war of 1876-77 was won by the Roumanians fighting under German leadership. If that is not admitted at St. Petersburg, it will be at Bucharest. Russia has not for centuries been the guardian of Europe against the infidel. It is the case, of course, that the Tartars conquered the Russians, and left so indelible an impression upon them that it is as true to-day as ever it was that if you scratch the Russian you find the Tartar. But it is not the case that the storm of Asiatic barbarism spent its force on Russia, and that Europe was thus saved. Not so very long ago, as historic time goes, the Turks were at the gates of Vienna; and at this very moment the Sultan rules over millions of European Christians. Russia's great writers have to come, so have her great painters, her great musicians, and her great prophets. Pushkin was of negro origin; Turgenieff was an exile in France; Paderewski is a Pole; Rubinstein was a Jew, a member of a race to Russia the most odious of any; and Antocolsky, a really fine sculptor, whose "Ivan the Terrible," in the Tretyakoff galleries at Moscow, is surpassed by nothing in the whole domain of sculpture, was also a Jew. Nothing can be more absurd than Russia's claim to be received into the family of European nations by reason of her eminence in the fine arts. She enjoys no artistic eminence. In architecture she had the near example of Greece; but she refused to profit by it, and adopted instead a quasi-Byzantine style, rendered grotesque, or, as the Russians conceive, ornamental, by the addition of cupolas, resembling in shape inverted Portuguese onions, and coloured brightly in blue and green. Her painting is crude and garish; the Russian Government notoriously allows its subjects no opportunity of distinguishing themselves in literature; and her music is harsh and discordant, even when, as was the case with Tschaikoffsky, an attempt is made to imitate the classic mode, and to show that it can flourish as well on Russian soil as on the soils of Germany and Italy. The efforts to demonstrate Russian refinement through Russian art is the sheerest futility. All that can be shown in this wise is the extent to which the Muscovite remains a Tartar.

THE WARM WATER PORT.

But our author goes further. "European Russia," he is kind enough to tell us, "has some sea on every side—the White Sea on the north, the Baltic on the west, the Black on the south, and the Caspian on the east. They are all inland seas, and have the usual disadvantages of inland seas in respect of climate and commerce. The White Sea is merely an arm of the Arctic Ocean, but the latter is of very little value for commerce, and is practically an inland sea between Nordkyn and Novaya Zemlya. The Baltic and the Black, though independent seas, are terribly shut in, and the Caspian is

simply a huge lake. Therefore Russia must get a port on the Mediterranean." Must she? But why? If warm water ports were lying ownerless on the shores of the Mediterranean, like pebbles on the roadside, for anybody to pick up who chose, Russia would be within her right in claiming one. But what is meant when it is said that she must have a port in the Mediterranean is that she must have a port at somebody else's expense. At whose expense? And why? The claim that a country, because it is unfortunately situated geographically, must have greater access to the sea would be preposterous in the case of a civilised state. It is doubly so in the case of Russia, which is not a civilised state, whatever may be urged to the contrary; and which daily proves by her conduct that she is not entitled to be regarded as civilised. What would be thought were Switzerland, which has no access to the sea, to demand a port at the expense of France or Italy? We imagine the answer to such a request would be short, sharp, and conclusive, and would meet with the approbation of the entire world. Canada, a civilised country if there is one anywhere, would be glad of an ice-free port on her east-coast. But nobody, in Canada or out of it, ventures to suggest that she should acquire such a port at the cost of the United States. Why, then, should we listen to proposals from Russia which would be scouted were they advanced by Canada, by Switzerland, or by any civilised state? And, besides, what does Russia want with an ice-free port? Ports are for trade. But Russia wants no trade—no trade, that is, with her neighbours, no international trade. According to the theory of her statesmen, she ought to be self-sustaining, and to have no trouble with outsiders, who, in their judgment, are rather more infidel and more pernicious than the Tartars who settled round the Kreul of Moscow, and there formed the still extant Kitai Gorod, or Chinatown. For in considering Russian policy it must never be forgotten that, according to Russian estimates, Russia is not merely a Christian country, but the Christian country—the only Christian country. Russia is not a trading country. She is a huge monopolist, an outheroader of McKinley and Meline. To our thinking, ice-free ports are best left in the hands of those who will use them for the purpose for which they are intended. The argument, if it can be called an argument, that Russia should have some because nature and conquest have endowed her with none is sheer impudence.

III.—THE HUMANITARIAN STATE.

The sincerity of Russia's humanitarian protestations was convincingly revealed by her declarations at the Brussels Congress of 1875, and by its sequel—the advance in Central Asia. Her pretext for summoning the Congress was the desirability of mitigating the sufferings endured in war. But her real motive was suspected to be to aid the military in the subjugation of the maritime and minor States; and a determined attempt was made to induce the British Government to abstain from sending a delegate to the Congress. The effort failed, and Major-General Sir Alfred Horsford was authorised to attend the meeting; but that the British Government shared the suspicion entertained outside is shown by General Horsford's instructions. "Her Majesty's Government," he was told by Lord Derby, "have accepted the assurances of the Russian and other Governments that the Conference will not entertain any questions relating to maritime operations or naval warfare, and they are glad to learn from these assurances that there is no intention of enlarging the scope of the Conference so as to include the discussion of general principles of international law. At the same time, it will be your duty to guard carefully against being led, in the course of deliberations on other matters, into any discussions which may, however remotely, affect the subject of maritime warfare, which her Majesty's Government have thus agreed with other Governments should be formally excluded; and if any papers are attempted to be presented to the Conference, or any statements made which refer to it, you will protest against such statements or papers being received, and apply to her Majesty's Government for instructions. You will also abstain from taking part in any discussions upon any points which may be brought forward which may appear to you to extend to general principles of international law not already universally recognised and accepted."

AN ADMIRABLE PROGRAMME.

In these circumstances, England's acceptance of the Russian invitation was not particularly complimentary to the conveners of the Congress. Nevertheless, Russia persevered. The sneers of the cynics did not deter her, for her cause was good. It was nothing less, as Baron Jomini, her representative, assured the Conference, in reading to the delegates his letter of instructions, than the cause of humanity. "It is to be hoped," proceeded the document read

by his Excellency, "that the progress of enlightenment and of manners will render wars more and more rare. At the same time, in the present state of things, war remains an evil, if not necessary, at least sometimes inevitable. . . . War cannot be the normal state of nations. It is only a painful exception. The rule is peaceful relations which soften the manners by uniting the interests of nations. The duty of Governments is, then, whilst holding themselves ready for war, to use all their efforts to maintain peace while it exists, and to re-establish it if it has been disturbed. From this point of view, the only legitimate object of every war is to obtain as promptly as possible a peace rendered more solid and durable. . . . Reprials . . . leave feelings of resentment which increase the difficulty of a return to peaceful relations. To reconcile the exigencies of two states of things which appear the absolute negation of each other is not an easy task. But that this task is arduous is not a reason for not approaching it in a spirit of practical and serious goodwill based upon the sentiments of humanity, the duties of civilisation, and the solidarity of general interests."

PERSUADING PASSIVE RESISTERS.

All this, and a good deal more of the same sort, was said by Baron Jomini in what at the time was well described as "a Royal speech from the Emperor of Europe to his subject Council assembled at Brussels." It sounds very nice, as Russian sentimental assurances usually do. But, as men do not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles, it becomes us to ask what had been the acts of the Russian Government just prior to the Brussels Congress and what were its acts immediately after. One of the most tolerant, best informed, and most moderate of students of foreign politics put the question a year later in connection with Turkish affairs, and with the proposal that Russia should be invited to occupy the provinces of Russia and Herzegovina. "The first point to be investigated before we can safely call upon Russia to aid us in a humane undertaking," wrote Baron de Worms, "is whether Russia is herself a humane Power"; and, answering his own query in the negative, he proceeded to narrate the story of Kaufmann's massacre of the Yomud Turkomans. But, before that, Russia had been engaged in restoring order in the Polish diocese of Cheim. Cheim was peopled largely by adherents of the United Greek Church. They were converted to Orthodoxy by the simple process of marching troops into the villages, turning the clergy out of the churches, installing Russian popes in their stead, and shooting down peasants who opposed these measures actively or passively. The gentle, humane, Christian Russ, the admirer of soft manners, has a rough and ready method of dealing with the passive resister. In the ^{January} of 1874 troops were sent into the village of Cheim, and the

commanding officers called upon the inhabitants to sign a declaration, expressing their willingness to accept the Russian rite. In the villages where the peasantry refused to sign, the soldiers were ordered to beat the men and women with the butt-ends of their muskets, and to fire on them if they still continued refractory. At Polubice six peasants were either beaten to death or mortally wounded; at Drelow five were killed, and 28 severely wounded; while all were beaten with sticks, each of the men receiving 50 blows, each woman 20, and each child 10. At Pratulin the troops fired on the peasantry while they were singing hymns in the market place. Twelve peasants were killed, and the dead bodies were exposed by the Russians for a whole day in the church, the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages being invited by the Russian officials to see "how the Government punishes disobedience to the will of the Tsar." And yet all religions are tolerated in Russia! and yet Russia is administered on "the precepts of justice, of charity, and of peace, which, far from being applicable solely to private life, should, on the contrary, directly influence the resolutions of princes, and guide all their steps, as being the sole means of consolidating human institutions and remedying their imperfections."

THE YOMUD MASSACRE.

The story of the Yomud massacres is an even more striking exemplification of the practical humanity which Holy Russia has sworn in the name of the Indivisible Trinity to observe. Kaufmann, as Mr. Schuyler tells us, after the taking of Khiva, ordered the Yomud tribes to pay a contribution of 300,000 roubles in fifteen days. They asked for time. Kaufmann refused it, and detained as prisoners 12 Yomuds who came to negotiate with him. The declinature was a mere pretext, Kaufmann's aim being, not money, but extermination. Accordingly, without waiting for the fifteen days to expire, he issued the following order to General Golovatcheff:—"If your Excellency sees that the Yomuds are not occupying themselves with getting together money, but are assembling for the purpose of opposing our troops, or perhaps even of leaving the country, I order you immediately to move on the settlements of the Yomuds which are placed along the Hazovat Canal and its branches, and to give over the settlements of the Yomuds and their families to complete destruction and their herds and property to confiscation." Golovatcheff was only too willing. In a speech to his officers he said:—"This expedition does not spare either age or sex—kill all of them"—and Golovatcheff, repeating this address to his Circassians, remarked:—"I hope you will fulfil these commands strictly, in the Circassian style, without a question. You are not to spare either age or sex. Kill all of them." All, or nearly all, were killed. An eye-witness told Mr. Schuyler:—

"The Cossacks seemed to get quite furious, and rushed on them with their sabres, cutting everybody down, whether a small child or an old man. I saw several such cases. I remember one case in particular, which I could not look at for more than a moment, and rode hastily by. A mother, who had been riding on horseback with three children, was lying dead. The eldest child was dead also. The youngest had a sabre cut through its arm, and, while crying, was wiping off the blood. The other child, a little older, was trying to wake up the dead mother."

So much for the humanity of the Power which joins Holy Alliances, which promotes Congresses for the mitigation of the needless horrors of war, and which signalises itself by the promulgation of disarmament manifestoes.

IV.—PETER THE GREAT'S WILL.

The mention of Peter the Great's political testimony will doubtless bring a smile to the lips of the sceptical and particularly to the lips of those who have been induced to believe of Russia that which Russian diplomacy wishes them to believe. "What," it will be asked, "is this so-called will? Have we not been assured times out of number that it is a fictitious document, and that Peter the Great left no will?" We have been so assured. But we have also been assured that Peter the Great did leave a will, and that it enjoined the considerate treatment of the Poles. This discovery was effected at a period when all civilisation stood aghast at the manner in which the Tsardom suppressed the Polish rebellion; and it affords evidence, so far as it goes, of the authenticity of the document commonly known as Peter the Great's will. Whether that instrument is or is not authentic, is however, a secondary matter. What is important is that it furnishes the key to Russian policy, and that it is accepted by the Russians, who have executed it as far as possible. As has been said, "The will of Peter the Great is engraven on the minds of Russians as part of their religion." Shortly after the suppression of the Polish rising a Russian lady of high rank was defending the conduct of the St. Petersburg Government to a Polish dame. "You think," she said, "that we are oppressing you out of mere cruelty. You are very much mistaken. We are acting in self-defence. Russia cannot exist with a Catholic Poland between her and Europe. We have to fulfil the will of Peter the Great."

EUROPEAN DOMINATION.

In 1836, the memoirs of the Chevalier d'Eon were published in Paris, as derived from the archives of the French Foreign Office, by Galliardet, who declared that the will of Peter therein contained was the only complete copy. The work was immediately suppressed, but the following year a Belgian edition was issued, and is, we believe, still to be obtained. Because it is the key to Russian policy, and setting aside from the present all question of its genuineness, we reprint the will as it was given in Galliardet's book. It bore the heading, "Copy of the Plan of European Domination, left by Peter the Great to his successors to the throne of Russia, and deposited in the archives of the palace of Peterhof, near St. Petersburg"; and in the highly pietistic preamble, written in the name of the "Most Holy and Indivisible Trinity," Peter urges that, according to his views, which he believes to be those of Providence, the Russian

people are called to the general domination of Europe. The European nations, he argues, have, for the most part, arrived at a condition of senility, and must be easily and indubitably conquered by a young and new people, when this last shall have attained to full strength and greatness. To this end, he bequeaths to Russia the following instructions, which he recommends to their constant attention, as Moses recommended the Tables of the Law to the Jews.

TEXT OF THE WILL.

(1) The Russians must be kept in a continual state of war, in order to retain the soldiery in warlike dispositions. No repose, except to ameliorate the finances, to recruit the army, and to wait for moments propitious for attack. Thus make peace serve for war, and war for peace, in the interest of the aggrandisement and increasing prosperity of Russia.

(2) By all possible means we must draw towards us, out of the best instructed nations of Europe, generals in time of war and learned men in time of peace, in order to make the Russian nation profit by the advantages of other countries without losing any of her own.

(3) On all occasions we must take part in the affairs and in the discussions of any kind in Europe, above all with those of Germany, which, situated nearer to us, is of more direct interest.

(4) Poland must be divided by our keeping up there disorder and perpetual jealousies; the powerful must be gained over by gold: the Diet must be influenced and bribed to act upon the elections of the Kings; we must create for ourselves there partisans, protect them, send thither Russian troops, and leave them there until they have found an opportunity of remaining there for ever. Should the neighbouring Powers raise difficulties, we must satisfy them temporarily by parcelling out the country, until we can re-take what we have yielded.

(5) We must take from Sweden as much as we can, and cause ourselves to be attacked by her, in order that we may have a pretence for subjugating her. With this view, we must separate her from Denmark, and Denmark from Sweden, and keep up carefully their rivalry.

(6) The wives of Russian Princes are always to be chosen amongst German Princesses, to multiply family alliances, to tighten the interests, and thus to bind Germany to our cause by increasing there our influence.

(7) We must principally seek the alliance of England for commerce, because it is the Power most in want of us for its Navy, and which can be the most useful in the development of ours. We must exchange our timber and other productions for her gold, and establish numerous relations amongst her trading and seamen and ours, which will form those of this country to navigation and commerce.

(8) We must incessantly extend ourselves towards the north, along the Baltic Sea, and towards the south along the Black Sea

(9) We must advance as far as possible towards Constantinople and the East Indies. Whoever shall reign there will be the true master of the world. Therefore, we must excite continual wars, sometimes with Turkey, sometimes with Persia; create dockyards on the Black Sea; take possession, little by little, of that sea, as well as of the Baltic, which is a point doubly necessary for the success of the project: we must hasten the downfall of Persia; penetrate as far as the Persian Gulf; re-establish, if possible, the ancient commerce of the Levant through Syria; and advance as far as the Indies; which are the emporium of the world. When once there, we can do without the gold of England.

(10) We must carefully seek and keep up the alliance with Austria: apparently second her design for future domination over Germany; and we must excite underhand against her the jealousy of the Princes. We must induce each and all of these to seek succour from Russia, and exercise a sort of protection over the country, which may prepare our future domination.

(11) We must interest the House of Austria in the expulsion of the Turk from Europe, and neutralise her jealousy after the conquest of Constantinople, either by exciting a war between her and the old States of Europe, or by giving up to her a part of the conquest, to retake it from her afterwards.

(12) We must gather around us all the disunited or schismatic Greeks who are spread in Hungary, in Turkey, and in the south of Poland; we must make ourselves their centre, their support, and thus found, by anticipation, a universal predominance, a sort of royalty or sacerdotal supremacy. There will be so many friends in the midst of each of our enemies.

(13) Sweden having been dismembered, Persia overcome, Poland subjugated, Turkey conquered, our armies united, the Baltic and Black Seas guarded by our ships, we must then separately and very secretly offer to the Court of Versailles, then to that of Vienna, to share with them the universal monarchy. If one of the two accede to the proposal (which is not improbable, if we feather their ambitions and conceit) then we must make use of that one for destroying the other. We must then annihilate in its turn that which remains, by beginning with it a struggle which cannot be problematical, because Russia will already then possess, as a property, the East and a great part of Europe.

(14) If, which is not likely, both refuse the proposals of Russia, we must excite the one against the other, and compel them to mutual exhaustion. Then seizing the decisive moment, Russia will launch upon Germany her troops established beforehand, whilst two considerable fleets, one from the Sea of Azoff, the other from the Port of Lüthüngel, will come out under the convoy of the armed fleets of the

Black Sea and the Baltic. Advancing upon the Mediterranean and the ocean they will inundate France upon the one side, whilst Germany will be attacked on the other: and if these two countries be vanquished, the rest of Europe will easily and without delay bend under the yoke. Thus can and must Europe be subdued.

IS IT AUTHENTIC?

Is this document authentic? What does that matter? A more important question is: "Does it represent Russian aims and methods?" Few people out of Russia will answer in the negative.

V.—DOES RUSSIA ACT ON THE WILL?

The all-important question with reference to the document called the will of Peter the Great is, as we have said, not whether it is authentic, not whether it was really Peter's political testament, but whether it affords a clue to Russian policy, whether Russia acts upon it, whether she executes it in so far as its execution has been practicable. A very cursory examination will suffice to satisfy the most incredulous that Russia does act upon it, that she has executed it as far as circumstances permitted, and that she is endeavouring to execute it yet. It is enjoined, in the first article of the "Plan of European Domination," that the Russians shall "be kept in a continual state of war," except when a state of peace is absolutely dictated by financial considerations. Is this injunction not obeyed literally? Russia is always either at war or engaged in the pursuit of a policy which, if persisted in, must eventuate in war. She maintains the largest army of any State in the world, although she herself is threatened by nobody, and a mere militia would meet all her requirements. She is constantly strengthening her fleet, although command of the sea is not a matter of vital importance to her as it is to us, and although she discourages foreign trade by every means in her power. The so-called Peace manifesto of the Tsar, which was really a plea for suspending the progress of armaments, was the herald of a dastardly attempt to press the youth of Finland into her military force, and so to augment it. It was the prelude, too, to the assault upon the integrity of China, to the menace to Japan, and to the existing condition of affairs in the Balkan peninsula. People who blame the Macedonian Committee and the Bulgarian Government for the bloodshed in the European provinces of Turkey must not forget what happened at the Shipka celebrations, and what Ignatief said on that occasion. Decidedly, the Russians are "kept in a continual state of war," although they have to be starved that the thing may be done.

BUYING FRIENDS.

Look again, at the fourth article. Was Poland not divided as the consequence of the fomentation within her borders of disorders and jealousies? And were not the neighbouring Powers satisfied temporarily by the "parcelling out of the country?" The powerful in Poland were to be gained by gold. The Diet was to be bribed to influence the election of Kings, and Russian partisans were to be

created. Is not this Russia's invariable policy wherever men are to be bought and the creation of partisans is possible? To what is the present miserable plight of China attributable if not to the free use of the rouble? Where are there not Russian partisans?

IX SCANDINAVIA.

And, passing on to the fifth article, a most interesting one at the moment, has not as much been taken from Sweden as could be, and have not the Scandinavian communities been separated from one another? Is not their rivalry kept up as much as possible? What is the cause of the bitterness between Norway and Sweden but the proceedings of the Russophile Radicals of Norway? England and France showed that they understood Russia's designs in this quarter when they signed the Treaty of 1835 constituting themselves the joint guarantors of the independence and the integrity of the Scandinavian peninsula. Peter's injunction to his successors was, not that they should attack Sweden directly, but that they should so act as to cause Sweden to attack Russia. It is not that which they are doing now? Finland, formerly a Grand Duchy, ruled by a Grand Duke, and largely peopled by Swedes, has been violently, and in flagrant violation of its sovereign's oath, incorporated in the Tsardom. Russian troops have been placed on the Swedish and Norwegian frontiers; they are only a few miles from the Atlantic: and Russian spies are all over the peninsula. Up to what point will Sweden be able to withstand this provocation? We are not prepared to answer the question. But it is obvious that there must come a time when Sweden will be obliged, in self-defence, to take some official notice of Russia's doings on her borders. Then Russia will get her opportunity. She is certainly executing the fifth clause of Peter's will.

AN ADVANCE ALL ROUND.

It is hardly necessary to insist that she has carried out the sixth, seventh, and the eighth, by choosing the wives of her princes from amongst German princesses, by extending along the Baltic and the Black Sea, and by advancing towards Constantinople in one direction, and to the East Indies in the other. Her outposts are close to ours on the north-west of India; the great deserts which Lord Salisbury deemed to be a security when inspected on big maps have been overpassed; and the wrenching of Macedonia from Turkey will place her at the gates of Constantinople, the back door of which she was made from the Black Sea. But everybody may not have observed that persistently, yet stealthily, she is now striking to execute the ninth article, which has reference to the destruction of Persia. Two

or three years ago she arranged for the wholesale conversion of the Persian Nestorians to Orthodoxy, thus creating for herself a body of partizans some 40,000 strong. The mere existence of this party will afford her her pretext whenever she is in need of it. "Penetrate as far as the Persian Gulf," said Peter. Russia has absolutely no trade with the Gulf ports. Her commercial interests there are nil. Yet she has acquired a foothold of some sort at Binder Abbas; she has subsidized a trading steamer to run between that port and Odessa: and now she has decided to station a warship permanently in the Gulf. In this connection, we may quote a passage, penned nearly half a century ago, by a deep student of foreign affairs in general, and of Russian policy in particular. "The advance towards Constantinople is written in the July Treaties, the battle of Navarino, the 'pacification' of Greece and of the Levant, and in the possession now taken of the Black Sea. The advance towards India really commenced, as Napoleon predicted, when Poland was finally subdued. The same year brought the fall of the first practical barrier—the Circassians. She will shortly be our neighbour, ready in case of a fresh mutiny in India, first to come to our aid, and then to take our place. For more than a hundred years Russia has been engaged in wars with Persia and Turkey. In the former country she has of late years got England to engage in wars for her benefit." We may add that in still later years she has got England to turn her back on Turkey for Russia's benefit. At this moment, we are backing a scheme which, so far as Russia is concerned, aims at converting Macedonia into a Russian province. Foreign statesmen ought, one would imagine, to see these things. Perhaps they do; but they behave as if they did not.

RUSSIA AND AUSTRIA.

The "Alliance with Austria," urged by Peter so strenuously, has always been cultivated. It was strengthened materially in 1896, when the Emperor Francis Joseph went to St. Petersburg, and there concluded the Balkan arrangement with the Tsar. Russia and Austria are acting together now. Between them, they have contrived to obtain the mandate of Europe; and Russia is thereby enabled to carry out Peter's further injunction that Austria should be induced to put herself in sympathy with, or at least to take part in, the movement for expelling the Turks from Europe.

Whatever, then, may have been the origin of Peter the Great's will, we do not see how it can be denied that Russia acts upon it.

VI.—PETER THE GREAT'S WILL: IS IT AUTHENTIC?

Although, as we have said, the authenticity of Peter the Great's will is a secondary matter in comparison with the fact that Russia acts upon it, the origin of the document remains an interesting historical question. Students of the problem have, we believe, arrived almost unanimously at the opinion that the political testament is what it pretends to be, and that, if it was not written by Peter himself, it was inspired by him, and embodies his ideas. To quote one of these authorities, "no doubt is entertained that the great Sovereign who impressed his age with a respect and awe for which scarcely there is to be found a parallel, and who raised his country in the eyes of surrounding nations into a state of great and menacing promise, reduced to specific rules, and bequeathed as a political instruction, the heads of the plan which he had formed for organising the Russian people for political domination and for military conquest." The Chevalier d'Eon, in whose memoirs what is understood to be the correct text of the will was discovered in the archives of the French Foreign Office, was sent by Louis the Fifteenth on a secret mission to the Tsaritsa Catherine and returned in 1757.

AN HONEST CONSPIRACY.

That the French King accepted the document as authentic is tolerably certain. He may not have believed that his missioner had supplied him with the will of Peter, but he did believe that there existed a scheme for securing to Russia the domination of Europe by the methods enjoined in the so-called testimony; and he took steps to render the plan nugatory. Proof of this is, or was, contained in the memoirs of one Fabvier, published at Hamburg in 1798, and to be found in the Berlin library as lately as 1858. We say was because it is understood that the copies of Fabvier's works were suppressed, and generally withdrawn from the libraries of Europe. And on the accession of Louis the Sixteenth every precaution was taken to efface all traces of the measures which had commended themselves to his predecessor. It has been asserted that "the Comte de Broglie, who on the death of Louis the Fifteenth was the chief depositary of the secret, proposed to his successor that he should be shut up in the Bastille, in order that he might so have the unobserved means of communication with him, and be thus able to give him the grounds upon which this enterprise had been undertaken, and the thread of this honest conspiracy for the protection of the human race. But all was in vain. Louis the Sixteenth did not dare to be informed. The persons enlisted in this design were

bound by an oath of secrecy. The successive Foreign Ministers of France were not in the secret. The endeavours of the King to resist Russia had to be concealed from the Foreign Office of France. Their letters passed through the Post-office under feigned names; the premier Valet de Chambre of Louis the Fifteenth was sworn in that he might go to the Post-office to get the letters intended for the King."

THE "REAL" WILL.

Whatever of truth there may be in this strange, eventful the Russians continued to denounce the will as a fabrication. Not only, said they, was the so-called will of Peter the Great not his will, but he had left behind him no political testimony whatever. One fine day, however, it suited them to discover that Peter had left a political testimony behind him, although it was not the document ordinarily advanced as his will. The fine day occurred in the June of 1865; and there can be no doubt that the object of the discovery was to whitewash Russia in the eyes of humanity, staggered by the barbarities employed in the suppression of the Polish rising. The useful Reuter was the disseminator of the intelligence. The gist of his telegram, dated from Dresden, was as follows:—

The last number of the *Archive for the History of Saxony* contains an extremely important article, showing that the document hitherto believed to be Peter the Great's political testament, and which contains a plan for the subjugation of Europe, and notably for the partition of Poland, is not genuine. The author of the article, Count C. F. Vitzthum of Eckstadt, proves from reports of Harr von Petsold, Saxon Minister at St. Petersburg in 1747, that Peter the Great really did leave a political testament, but that its contents are diametrically opposite to those of the document hitherto put forward as the true will.

MAXIMS MILD AND MILD.

The following are the maxims of Peter the Great on the policy to be pursued by Russia towards Poland, and which are in direct contradiction with article 4 of the apocryphal last will, recommending the partition of that kingdom:—"Perfectly good friendship must at all times be kept up in Russia with Poland, and no opportunity be looked upon as so favourable as to want to gain something fresh at her loss and damage. For as the latter is a large, favoured, and well-peopled country, we must the more avoid driving her to desperation by any sort of oppression, and thereby letting her know her force, because Russia, on the other hand, is not so populated, but is just as much exposed as Poland. It must, therefore, be considered that, owing to the interest other Powers would take in the conservation of the Poles, she herself would, in case of necessity, never want allies, but that rather the Turks, Tartars, and Swedes,

would stand ready to give help, and it would be just as easy for the former, if obtaining free and assisted passage through Poland, to fall upon Russia with effect, as it would otherwise be difficult. Russia has, therefore, only to take care that Poland remains in her present shape, and the means to that end are mainly these: Followers of the Greek creed in that country are not to be oppressed; the augmentation of the regular army is most carefully to be avoided; and by the grant of certain pensions amongst the magnates to have at all times a hold upon some of the cleverest and most respected, in order, with their help, to be able to advance or counteract, as may be desired, any matter at the Diets. Further, Russia must establish a close and secret understanding with the King of Poland, especially in his quality of Elector of Saxony. In this last quality she owes to the same the preservation of her crown, as had not the Saxons advanced before Riga after the action of Narva, which terminated so disastrously to Russia, thereby causing the Swedish armies to move thither, and divert the whole *theatrum belli* to Poland, all ways of recovering herself would have been cut off.

“ RECIPROCITY ” WITH POLAND.

It is now seen that the King of Prussia constantly lays by mere money and collects troops. As now the King of Poland, especially as Elector, has one and the same interest with Russia to keep a watchful eye upon this neighbour, whose alliance experience has shown cannot be trusted, and to prevent the same making any new conquests, in order therefore to anticipate the same, and in sudden cases to be able reciprocally to give each other aid, no better and safer means can be found than to remain at all times in alliance and understanding with the Electoral House of Saxony.

NOT A FABRICATION.

Critics of this “new will,” or portion of it, have noted that there is no fundamental difference between it and the “old will” so far as Poland is concerned. The methods to be pursued are expressed less brutally. That is all. According to the old will, Poland was to be “divided by our keeping up there disorder and perpetual jealousies.” According to the new will, dissident religionists were to be persecuted, which seems a pretty satisfactory way of keeping up disorders and jealousies. England has herself protected a religious minority in Ireland with results familiar to most people. To grant pensions to the magnates, too, is remarkably like bribing the Diet. After a review of all the available evidence, the conviction forced upon me is that, on Russian showing, Peter the Great’s will exists, and that it is what the Chevalier d’Eon represents it to be. In brief, the will is no fabrication, but is authentic.

VII.—THE STATE OF GOOD FAITH.

American journals, just to hand by mail, afford some interesting reading with reference to the re-occupation of Mukden by Russia. The publicists of the great Western Republic really seem to have supposed that because Russia promised to evacuate Manchuria, Manchuria was as good as evacuated. They find instead, that the Tsar's troops continue to be sent from the west to the east; that the decapitation of an alleged bandit without trial is made an excuse for the seizure of the capital of the province (as if there was no such thing as the "administrative order" in the dominions of Nicholai Alexandrovich), and that Russia's hold upon Manchuria is now firmer than ever it has been. There is, in consequence, a fierce shriek from the United States against the perfidy, the immorality, and the wantonness of Russian tactics. The outburst will amuse European students who have learnt to look facts in the face, and who have been taught by experience, gained at first or second hand, to regard a Russian pledge as one given to be broken, not to be kept, and as intended solely to advance Muscovite interests by misleading the opponents of Muscovite schemes. An educated European, we venture to assert, would have been more surprised had the evacuation of Manchuria followed Russia's promise that it should be evacuated than he has been by the re-occupation of the sacred city. In America the latter proceeding has provoked an explosion of indignation. We can only hope that all this energy will not be expended in vain.

STILL BARBARIC.

The Americans, we trust, will learn their lesson, and will treat Russia with greater justice in their future dealings with her. To consider Russia as an égal, to negotiate with her on a footing of equality, to regard her word as the equivalent of her bond is not to treat her with justice. It is to do her a gross injustice. For Russia is not a civilised State. It is true that tramways run along the Nevaki Prospect and that the Tverskaya Ulitsa is lighted by electricity. But tramways and incandescent lamps are not civilisation. Civilisation is rather the product of an absorption of the golden rule; and Russia is not civilised.

A MATTER OF INSTINCT.

In saying this we mean no offence to the Russians. It has been pleaded on behalf of the Greeks, who have earned the reputation of being the most accomplished thieves in Europe, that they are no thieves at all, because with them thieving is no robbery. They "do" you if they can; but, then, they expect you to "do" them. It is a case of diamond cut diamond; and the Hellenic theory is that all human diamonds are pretty much alike in their hardness. In other words, the Greek standard of morality is not our standard. The plea seems to us valid. As it would be absurd to expect an uneducated infant to observe the ethical principles, the courtesy, and the dignity, which we look for from a cultured adult, so it is courting disappointment to assume good faith on the part of rude peoples who are accustomed to gain their ends by trickery, and who are acquainted with no other means.

EASTERN KNAVES AND WESTERN FOOLS.

The Russian dictionary contains the word "chest," which is the equivalent for the English word, "honour." But the Russians do not understand it—have no conception whatever of the significance attached to it in the Western world.

On the contrary, if by saying one thing and doing another, the Russian can fulfil his designs more easily than by pursuing a straightforward course—by acting honestly, as an Englishman would express it—he considers himself the cleverer. This realized, the surprise evoked by Russian diplomacy ceases to have a justification. It is not that the Russian is more the knave for getting what he can in the best way that occurs to him, but that the westerner is the more the fool for accrediting him with qualities which he does not possess, and to which he lays no serious claim. Russian statesmanship has absolutely no sense of honour. That is the explanation at once of Russia's diplomatic "skill" and of her perfidy. It is because western statesmen have neglected to bear this in mind that they have been denominated as Russian agents, and that Sir John M'Neil was impelled to write: "The Cabinets and statesmen of Europe are the tools with which Russia works."

RUSSIAN DIPLOMACY.

Examples of Russian duplicity are spattered freely through the annals of history, ancient and modern. There are the cases of Central Asia, of Sebastopol, of Port Arthur, of Finland, and of Manchuria, to mention only two or three instances. The fact that the czar had sworn to maintain the Finnish constitution, and that copies of his oath were deposited in every church in the Grand Duchy,

did not weigh a straw with the Bobrikoffs, the Pobledonostseffs, and the rest of them. They wanted to incorporate Finland with the Tsardom, in order that Sweden may be attacked through Finland; and if incorporation necessitated an act of perjury, they were quite ready to commit that act. Whatever people may think of the Turk, he never was guilty of a crime of the like character. A case as well known as that of Finland is that of the Black Sea. It has been said that Russian international law consists of two clauses—(1) There is no law of nations except formal treaties. (2) These formal treaties are not binding on the Tsar. That they are binding on others is proved by Russia's treatment of Bulgaria, where she murdered, abducted, and dynamited in the name of international law. But what of the Tsar?

A TORN-UP TREATY.

After the Crimean War, Russia bound herself, by the Treaty of Paris, naturally in the name of the *Dieu toutpuissant* not to maintain a fleet in the Black Sea. Turkey was similarly bound, the Black Sea being neutralised. Turkey has kept her promise. There is no Turkish fleet in the Black Sea. But there is a Russian fleet there. It dates almost from the date of the Treaty of Paris. Before the ink on that instrument was well dry, Russia armed her mail steamers and merchantmen, and used them against ships trading to Circassia, whose crews were sent to Siberia. This was done, not only in defiance of the Treaty of Paris, but in violation of the Declaration of Paris, by which Russia agreed that "privateering is and remains abolished." The Circassians, the bulwark of Turkey, were thus suppressed, and, Russia having no longer any object in keeping the Turks out of the Black Sea, the Tsar calmly announced that he would no longer be bound by the Treaty of 1856 in so far as it "restricted his Majesty's rights in the Black Sea." This cool tearing up such portions of the Treaty as applied only to one of the signatories to it was acquiesced in by the other Powers without serious protest.

"THE WRONG HORSE."

Russia's present object is to secure the freedom of the Straits for Russian vessels, while the waterway is to be kept closed to the ships of other nations. Whether that object will be accomplished remains to be seen. The late Lord Salisbury, in a memorable speech, declared that in the Crimean war we "backed the wrong horse." If that was so, the wrong horse was England; since it was for England's security we fought, and not for Turkey. As Englishmen, we do not agree with the late Premier. But there can be little doubt that when we consented to the abrogation of the Black Sea clauses of the Treaty of Paris, we flung away the principal fruits of the long and arduous campaign in the Crimea.

VIII.—THE STORY OF CIRCASSIA.

It has been contended that the Russian Empire, so far from threatening that of Turkey, is really a dependency of Constantinople. A glance at the map of Europe will show that the contention is sound, although the importance of Turkey's geographical position has not always been recognised at the Sublime Porte. During the Crimean War, for example, Turkey did not interrupt Russian commerce. Yet she could have done so with ease, and possibly with consequences fatal to Russia; for the existence of a state of war puts the whole Black Sea trade at the mercy of Turkey, who can seize all Russian goods and shipping as they pass through the Bosphorus. This has always been clear enough to the Russians. "The Bosphorus closed, our commerce is annihilated" wrote the Emperor Nicholas in 1828. Prince Lieven told Lord Aberdeen, a year later, that "with respect to the free guarantee of the passage of the Bosphorus, it constitutes one of our necessities, for, in fine, the free navigation of the Bosphorus and the prosperity of a part of the dominions of the Emperor are united by an indissoluble link. We could not permit the caprice of a vizier, of a favourite, or of a Sultana, to arrest at will the whole movement of commerce, the whole progress of public and private industry in many of our provinces."

THE GRAND REASON.

A letter published in Berlin in 1870, and attributed to Prince Gortchakoff, is even more frank. "When we consider," says the writer, "what vast territories are watered by the Dniester, the South Boug, the Dnieper, and the Don, and what magnificent ports would be given by the coasts of the Sea of Azoff and the Euxine, it is evident that the possession of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles by her enemy Turkey is extremely dangerous for Russia; and she ought not to submit to it an instant longer. Russia ought to take possession of these passages; they are to her of vital importance. These passages constitute the sole issues for the products of the southern provinces; they are the great gates of the commerce of the Mediterranean and other outer world. The closing of the Bosphorus kills Russian commerce. She must possess Constantinople." What is the grand reason why Russia desires that the Double Eagle shall replace the Crescent above the dome of St. Sophia; and if she has not already taken Constantinople, it is simply because she has, as yet, not felt herself strong enough for the enterprise.

PAVING THE WAY.

But she has constantly been paving her road to Constantinople, sometimes stealthily, sometimes by sheer impudence; and a huge step towards the accomplishment of her task was taken when she was allowed to acquire Circassia. The Porte might have prevented this had it chosen. A declaration of war or even the threat of a declaration, would have stopped the whole business, because it would have closed the Straits to Russian commerce. Turkey, however, played into the hands of Russia, as she usually does; and the result was that, after 40 years of fighting, by means legitimate and illegitimate, one of her strongest bulwarks against Russian aggression was destroyed. Peter the Great's injunction that "we must incessantly extend ourselves along the Black Sea, take possession, little by little, of that sea," was thus obeyed; and European liberalism and civilisation missed a great chance.

THE CASE OF CIRCASSIA.

But how did Russia gain her ends? As invariably, by perfidy. The following narrative is extracted from a source which we believe to be authoritative:—By the Treaty of Kainardji, 1774, in Article 23, which is full of contradictions, Russia acknowledges the Circassians as subjects of the Sublime Porte. By the Treaty of Constantinople, 1784, Russia renounced in particular all right to the fortress of Soudjouk Kale, and recognised it as belonging in full sovereignty to Turkey. At the same time she renounced all the Tartar nation beyond the Kouban. By the Treaty of Jassy, January, 1792, the Sublime Porte bound itself to keep in order its "subjects" on the left bank of the Kouban. In the course of the continued hostilities of Russia against Circassia, she temporarily conquered Soudjouk Kale from the native inhabitants. By the Treaty of Bucharest, in 1812, she pretended to restore to Turkey, not only Soudjouk Kale, but the whole country, including places where she had never set her foot. All this time the Circassians were masters of their own country, which had never belonged to Turkey *de jure*, and which Turkey had not tried to subdue to herself. Having now manufactured a title in Turkey to the possession of Circassia, Russia, by the Treaty of Adrianople, September, 1829, obtained in Article 4 from Turkey that "the whole of the coast of the Black Sea, from the mouth of the Kouban as far as the port of St. Nicholas inclusive, shall remain in perpetuity under the dominion of the Emperor of Russia." Russia had to acquire this coast, the greater part of which for many years remained, not within the dominion of the Empire of Russia, but in the hands of its brave inhabitants.

A DIPLOMATIC EXCUSE.

Having forged a title to Circassia, Russia now pretended to make regulations "with a view to preserve these Eastern possessions on

the Black Sea from contagion, and at the same time to destroy illicit trade." These regulations never existed. Nevertheless, their existence was asserted by the Russian Ambassador, M. Bouteiff, to Mr Mandeville, the English Minister at Constantinople, who communicated to the British Consul-General at Constantinople and to the Foreign Minister in London (Lord Palmerston) the order of the Russian Government that no trade should take place except at the ports of Anapa and Redout Kale. That is to say that, under the pretence of regulating her own sea coast, Russia forbade all approach to a coast which she did not possess, and to which she had no right. and the English Government obeyed the prohibition. In the absence of commerce, the actual condition of the country was unknown: and wild stories were circulated of the savage and even cannibal tribes whom Russia had undertaken to civilize.

INDEPENDENT TESTIMONY

Of these savage cannibals Capt. St. John, who served in the Crimea with the 21st Fusiliers, wrote:—"At the time when Sheikh Shamyl and his brave people fought desperately in defence of their rocky homes and their austere freedom the name of Circassian was almost unknown to the British public. The name of this brave people has now become a familiar word, and is coupled with the idea of barbarous atrocities. The Circassian is the scapegoat of the situation; and whilst villages blaze, fired by bands of insurgents who see victory in destruction, their crimes are laid to the charge of this race of gentlemen, for such indisputably the Circassians are. In my childhood I also heard the name of Circassian coupled with atrocious cruelties and wanton massacre committed in Poland and Lithuania, and it was only years afterwards that I discovered that the so-called Circassians were simply disguised Cossacks of the line."

THE COST OF INDIFFERENCE.

In 1834 the celebrated Mr. Urquhart, discerning that the progress of Russia met with an unknown resistance in her march from the sea of Azoff to the Euphrates, undertook a voyage to the eastern coast of the Black Sea, and landed alone in Circassia. There he found a noble people "rightly struggling to be free," and he did his best to break the chain of falsehood and forgery which had been employed to sever them from the rest of the world. He accomplished little, however. The world looked on passively while Russia went on with her work of destroying the gallant race whom she had labelled as barbarians; England and Turkey withheld assistance; and the Circassians, never really beaten, were at length driven to take refuge on Turkish soil. One consequence of this persistent indecisive act which could easily have been suggested by their civilization was its bearing on Eastern Questions in Asia as well as the

IX.—THE TRAGEDY OF POLAND.

Russia professes to be the natural and the divinely appointed protector of all the Slav races. She stands towards them, she invites us to assume, *in loco parentis*. In that capacity, she guides them into and keeps them in the paths of the true faith ; she aids them in their progress towards civilisation ; and, above all, she safeguards their liberties. For the Slavs, at any rate, whatever she may be for others, Russia is the Liberator. That is what we are asked to believe ; and many worthy and well-intentioned people in this country do believe it. Their credence is amazing ; for there is not a page of Russian history which does not belie this impudent protestation of the Tsardom. With all civilised races, and with most that are uncivilised, kinship is a potent sympathetic influence. 'With Russia, however, the reverse is true. Russia persecutes her brethren with an even greater severity, with a greater degree of brutality, than she persecutes alien races which have become subject to her yoke. Some of the latter, indeed, are not persecuted at all. Russia either dares not or will not persecute, for example, her Mahomedan subjects in Asia ; and her pagans are allowed to remain pagan. On the other hand, no knout has too many thongs to be applied to the Poles and to the Uniaks. The Poles are Catholics ; but they are Slavs for all that. Because they are Catholics, they do not employ the Cyrillic alphabet. But they remain Slavs ; and, not only are they Slavs, but, in virtue of their abilities and of their culture, they may be regarded as the head of Slavdom. And how has this grand humanitarian force, this great liberating Power, treated her Poles ? How is she treating them now ?

"PACIFYING" POLAND.

We do not propose to retell the oft-told story of the tragedy of Poland. Everybody knows, who knows anything, that Russia, obedient to Peter the Great's injunction, fomented dissensions in Poland, spent her roubles there, secured the downfall of the king, and, to appease her neighbours, gave Prussia and Austria a share (the plunder), with the intention of taking it back at a convenient season. But it is worth while recollecting, at a moment like the present, when Russia, by reason of her avowed and despised affection for the Slavs, has obtained from Europe a mission to pacify Macbeth, how shameless of pretence Poland is a date long after she succeeded to her kingdom, and to Slavs earned it right to fester the nation of serfs so tamely. We have learnt, from the Brussels Congress, that the Polish

sources, with how much horror Russia looks upon the employment of needless barbarity in warfare. It was precisely upon the employment of needless and unspeakable barbarities that she relied for the suppression of the Polish rebellion of 1863.

KILLING IN COLD BLOOD.

The following are some quotations from the *Times* of the period:—

“April 21.—They (the Russians) put unarmed men, women, and children to the sword. They put the peaceful inhabitants of the town to the sword after they had routed the insurgents. The Russians do not allow the Poles to bury their slain, as the Grand Duke Constantine has declared that they shall be food for ravens.”

“April 23.—A magistrate named Swiderski thus described what he himself witnessed: ‘The Imperial troops attacked a house with a hailstorm of shots, I, a quiet inhabitant, being in the house at the time. At length the soldiers entered, killed my daughter with two bayonet stabs, wounded with two shots my son-in-law, and began to plunder. The Imperial troops, after killing four insurgents, whom we buried, murdering my daughter, and wounding my son-in-law, killed six servants of the household. (Their names are given.) The above were first castrated, and then twice stabbed with bayonets.’”

“June 24.—After the battle of Lubar, the Adjutant-General Kolsakoff—gave orders that the prisoners and the wounded should be buried in the same grave with the dead, and the Russian soldiers readily obeyed the instructions they had received.”

“November 11.—Young ladies are being continually arrested. Fifty, for the most part girls of from 17 to 19 years of age, were taken one night last week, and are now in prison. Old and young, men and women, are all treated alike in the matter of arrests, and are invariably seized in the middle of the night. From ten at night till four the next morning are the Russian official hours for deeds that will not bear the light

A Czar's FRANKNESS.

No wonder that Russian agents can describe “Turkish atrocities” in thrilling detail. In a pertinent passage written apropos of the Bosnian rising—a piece of Russian handiwork, in the course of which

the atrocities perpetrated in Poland were fathered on to the Turkish civilian soldiery—Baron de Worms remarked : “The policy of Russia as a State is the very reverse of a humane one. The system of Government which she pursues in her own country is such that no true friend of the Turkish Christians can wish that they should be subjected to a similar rule. However disinterested Russia may assume to be in her efforts to emancipate the Southern Slavs from the Ottoman dominion, it cannot be supposed that she would tolerate the grant of more liberal institutions to them than she herself possesses ; a free State is a dangerous neighbour to a despotic one, which must always dread the incitement to revolution amongst its own people produced by the proximity of a nation enjoying greater political liberties than themselves.” There is, we may observe parenthically, no room for supposition whatever upon the point. The Emperor Nicholas told Sir Hamilton Seymour frankly, in the series of remarkably frank communications which preceded the Crimean war, that he would not allow the “sick man”—the famous phrase was his—to be split up into little Republics, which would become “asylums for the Kossuths and Mazzinis of Europe.” And, although he thought that Servia and Bulgaria might become independent States, they were to be independent under his dominion. They have been converted into independent States ; and everyone is aware of the extent to which Russia has respected their independence.

BRUTALITY BY EDICT.

It is possible to be even more brutal by administrative edict than by the sword and the bayonet. Russia continues her policy of brutality in Poland. In Lithuania, Volhynia, and Podolia no Pole or Catholic is permitted to acquire land except by direct inheritance. Should a Polish or Catholic landowner become bankrupt his landed property is sold by auction ; and, as none but Russians can bid, and as those residing in the provinces in question are usually few in number and poor, the sum realised by the sales is so small that both the debtor and his creditors are ruined. This a cheap, and, we suppose, humane method of confiscation. Moreover, a special tax is imposed upon Poles and Catholics. Again, millions of the Tsar’s Polish subjects speak nothing else but Polish, a noble tongue, in many respects superior to Russian, as the Poles themselves are superior to the Russians. Yet in some parts it is a crime to speak Polish in public ; Polish inscriptions in shops are prohibited ; and the only language used in public offices and courts of justice is Russian. We have yet to learn that the Slav subjects of Turkey—the Macedonian Bulgars, for instance—are forbidden to speak ~~their language~~.

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION.

Religious persecution is rife. In his article on "The Political Situation in Poland," in last month's number of the *Westminster Review*, Mr. T. Filipowits says:—"In the eastern part of the country adjoining Lithuania, where the population is mixed in religious aspect, and consists partly of Roman Catholics and partly of members of the Great United Church, who after 1863 were officially transformed into the Orthodox faith, the attitude of the Government towards the heirs of the Catholic population is nearly the same as in Lithuania, while towards members of the Greek United Church, not now tolerated, it is one of unparalleled hostility." In the early part of his reign the present Tsar made some effort to ameliorate the woes of Poland, and appointed Count Imeritinsky, a non-Russian, Governor-General. Count Imeritinsky reported on the situation, recommending many reforms; but, adds M. Filipowits, "the attitude of the Government is so firmly and so deeply rooted in Russian policy that Count Imeritinsky, who could not overlook this part of the people's needs, did not venture to propose, in his report to the central Government, any single change in the direction of greater religious tolerance. The persecution of the members of the old Greek United Church was not restrained, and is still going on. The oppression of the Catholics also continues." And yet Russia, the customary lie on her lips, answers us that beneath her sceptre all religions are tolerated. We adduce the fact in no sense as a reproach against her. She is what she is. We cite it to show what she is—to show that she is the most brutal and barbarous of the world's States, that at the beginning of the twentieth century she stands alone in her persecutions and her barbarities, and that her claim to be considered civilised is baseless.

X.—THE BLINDNESS OF STATESMEN AND PEOPLES.

The most curious thing about Russian policy is the extraordinary facility with which she induces others to help her to carry it out, even although it is directed against them. It has been said with much truth that "from the time when the Massachusetts Peace Society hailed with delight the Holy Alliance"—an organisation formed in contravention of every principle which Peace Societies hold dear—a Russian scheme promulgated for the destruction of human liberties—"Russia has afforded her encouragement to every dreamer, to every usurper, and to every impostor who, led by ambition or by delusion, has disturbed the human race." It may be added that she has left in the lurch her *protégés* whenever it has suited her cue to do so. A Russian agent is sure of his ground only as long as he is useful to his employer. When he ceases, from whatever cause, to be of utility, he is thrown aside like a sucked orange, without a thought being given to the fate which may befall him. But Russia's catchings are not limited to dreamers, usurpers, and impostors. She manages, somehow or other, to attract to her side people of the best intentions, and especially those who are advocates of liberty and humanity, men who pride themselves upon the keenness of their vision when an attack upon popular freedom is threatened or contemplated. The Methodist preacher who cries out at the top of his voice that church rates are to be restored when it is a question, merely of treating fairly all the schools in the country, and with the schools the ratepayers, of whom he is one, will prostrate himself at the feet of the Tsardom when he is told that its nominal head contemplates carrying fire and the sword into the dominions of one or other of his tolerant and unaggressive neighbours. He does it without hesitation or reflection; and he does it although there is not a page of history which does not reveal the true significance of Russia's liberating expeditions, how they originated and how they are executed.

TWO INSTANCEs.

Take a couple of instances—one from recent and another from ~~recent~~ history. Ten years ago or thereabouts, all the western world was in hysterics because an Armenian anarchist society had brought about a rebellion in Asia Minor, and the Turk had suppressed the movement vigorously. There can be no doubt that Russia had her finger in this pie. (She was not ~~responsible~~ for that)

moment to enter into possession of Armenia, but she was anxious, as she always is, to keep Turkey in a state of turmoil. This was explained to the self-styled friends of Armenia; but all to no purpose. Russia, whose work they were doing so well while she herself was enabled to hide in the background, was implored to take the country she had put into a ferment; the British Government were ordered by those whose zeal was superior to their geography to send the fleet to Lake Van; and Lord Rosebery was forced to resign because he declined to assume the responsibility of commencing what might have proved a world-wide conflagration. Mark the position now. The Armenians of Russia are in rebellion because of the tyranny, spoliation, and religious persecution to which they have been and are being subjected by the Power which was implored in the name of humanity to rescue them from the Turk; while the very people who preferred the appeal so strenuously are denouncing their *protégés* because the latter have fallen out amongst themselves, and are engaged in murdering one another.

THE CASE OF MACEDONIA.

The contemporary case is that of Macedonia. The common assumption in the West is that the Macedonian Bulgarians have been driven into revolt by the intolerance and the tyranny of the Turk. No idea could be further from the truth. The Bulgars are not the only Christians in Macedonia. There are, the Servians, the Roumanians, and the Greeks. The Servians, however, are not in revolt; and the Roumanians and the Greeks are on the side of the Turk. The *fons et origo malorum* in Macedonia is the antagonism and the jealousy of the rival Christian races. But the evil would have been but small—a mere question of the opening of schools and the appointment of bishops—had it not been exacerbated by Russia. Those who wish to learn why the situation in Macedonia is as bad as it is must revert their attention to the Shipka “festivities,” and themselves how it came to pass that Ignatief and a whole host of distinguished Russian officers went to Bulgaria to deliver inflammatory speeches at that critical conjuncture. If they will think of these events, they will probably be less enthusiastic about the new scheme of reforms.

BLIND STATESMANSHIP.

But statesmen are as blind to Russia's intrigues as the masses; if not blinder. The Powers, with the dubious exception of Germany, are now engaged in doing Russia's work in Macedonia. England, without perhaps, being aware of it, is acting quite as Russia's ally. Russia, an aggressive state, nay, the aggressive state, is seeking in Macedonia, as in Asia Minor, the weakening of Turkey, an

unaggressive state, and, in accordance with Peter's will, is interesting Austria in the expulsion of the Turk from Europe. And England—in aiding and abetting the design—is showing herself more Russian than the Russians. But this is nothing new. Statesmen seem resolved to close their eyes to Russia's aims. But for this Poland might still be a kingdom; Finland might have retained its independence; and Turkey might not have been shorn of one province after another. Gustavus the Third of Sweden warned them all of what was in store for them.

A KING'S WARNING.

In his *Danger to the Political Balance of Europe*, he wrote:—“A kingdom almost unknown in Europe during the last century, and gradually aggrandised at the expense of all her neighbours, whose civilisation contributed only to make conquests, has menaced for forty years the political balance of power. Sweden, Poland, Turkey, Prussia and Germany have experienced the effects of her enterprising spirit. All the Courts of Europe had experienced her insolence before that tragedy to which Catherine the Second owed her elevation to the throne. Since that period, from the Caspian Sea to the Straits of Gibraltar, there is no country of which Russia has not disturbed the tranquillity or alarmed the precautions; every year has produced new designs, which arose evidently from one general plan, and their execution has found no other obstacle than that which has arisen from the revenues of that empire which were often stretched so far as to need a temporary repose from the abuse of power and the prodigality of the Government.”

INTERFERENCE AND INTRIGUE.

“But her exhausted revenues have not created the security of other States; for the hand of power, tried with the exertions of open violence, prepared for them a war not less dangerous—a war of negotiations. Ceasing to become the prey of the sword, they had still to encounter her artifices, her intrigues and negotiations. Europe presented a theatre of divisions, of troubles, and disorders, of which the springs and machines were fabricated at St. Petersburg. At length, after having excited Power against Power, and interest against interest, in the neighbouring States, the Empire of Russia predominated alone in the vast anarchy, dictated laws through her ambassadors, and prevented all combination of resistance.”

The policy remains the same. So does the blindness. .

XI.—RUSSIA'S TREATMENT OF SERVIA.

Russia, according to her own account, is, as we remarked with reference to Poland, nothing if not the friend and the protector of Slavdom at large. It might be supposed that she would bestow especial benevolence on the Serbs : for Servia is orthodox, and the Prince of Montenegro, a Servian chieftain, has been described by a Russian Emperor as "the Tsar's only friend." But no. Servia has suffered with the rest ; and if her progress has been as slow as it has been, that is less her fault than that of the Power whose mission it is to suppress freedom and enlightenment wherever and whenever the chance is afforded her.

A DELIBERATE AIM.

This is not merely our assertion. It is what is said by the Serbs themselves. In 1883 a series of interesting letters from a Serb were published in an English newspaper, and were afterwards issued in pamphlet form. Under the appropriate heading of "Semper Eadem," the author—we are inclined to believe he was a statesman of some note, wrote :—"It is generally believed in England that, whatever may have been the faults of Russia, she has acted towards Servia the part of a disinterested friend. Nothing can be further from the truth. If it can ever be true of a nation that she pursues a deliberate aim, it can be said of Russia that her aim has always been first to weaken and then to absorb the Slav nationalities of the Balkan peninsula." And then he went on to prove his case, which indeed, was no difficult matter, and which is easier now, after the murder of the last of the Obrenovichs, than ever it was.

THE SECRET TREATY.

The Servians owe nothing to Russia. They earned their own emancipation, in 1804, by native valour and by the indomitable will and skill of the swineherd Karageorge, the Servian Napoleon. To Karageorge and to his successor Milosch Servia owes her independence. She has managed to retain it, but in spite of Russian opposition, and in spite of the black treachery of the Tsardom. When Napoleon was contemplating the subjugation of Russia, he urged Turkey to invade her from the south, while he himself attacked her from the north. The Tsar Alexander's response has been characterised as a master-stroke of policy. It was also a master-stroke

of villainy. He made peace with Turkey, and at the same time, by a secret treaty authorized her to invade and to re-conquer Servia. His object was twofold. He deprived Napoleon of a useful ally; and he also, as he conceived, taught Servia that it was hopeless for her to attempt to stand alone, and that if she wished to remain free from the Ottoman yoke, she must accept Russia's protection.

BUTCHERY AT BELGRADE.

But this was not all. To render Servia the more defenceless, to ensure that her beating should be thorough, "the Russian agent at Belgrade, M. Nedoba, by persuasion, threats, and fraud, induced Karageorge to accompany him to Russia. Hounded on by Russia, the troops of the Sublime Porte flooded Servia, and acted in the manner that usually characterizes the troops of that sublime Power. Then indeed ensued a scene of woe, which no tongue can adequately tell. Whole streets in Belgrade were lined with impaled peasants, and dogs ate the bodies of men still breathing. Yet who is the more to blame for these atrocities? Turkey, the stupid agent, who treated the Servians as rebellious vassals, or Russia, who, with words of friendship on her lips, suborned others, to do her deeds of darkness?" The question is put from Servian sources, and there can be but one answer to it. The scheme was Russian, and so was the mode of its execution.

THE SAME WEAPONS.

Let us here summon another Slav witness, M. Bystrzonowski, who in 1815 published, in Paris, a work on Servia, copies of which are probably not obtainable in England. "Servia," said the author, "had regained her independence by her own unaided efforts. Servia then possessed all the elements necessary for forming a nation, since she was victorious, free, and under the authority of a national chief who enjoyed her entire confidence. An independent Servia formed a centre for all the Slavs of the south to group themselves around it. Russia would thus have lost the fruits of her ruinous campaign in Turkey, and of her intrigues amongst the southern Slavs. To banish the possibility of such a catastrophe, Servia must at all hazards be convinced that she could only secure her independence by the aid of Russian protection. Russia made use of every means to lead astray the simple character of Karageorge; she dazzled him with brilliant promises, and she finally succeeded in inducing him to desert the national cause and the country. The Cabinet of St. Petersburg, felt sure that the Porte, weak, and, therefore, vindictive, would abuse its victory, reduce the Servians to despair, and thus compel them to throw themselves into the arms of Russia. If we think over the conduct of Russia, and find that she makes use of the same weapons to-day as then, we may be permitted to believe that she entertains the same views, and works for similar results."

CHECKMATING MIOSCH.

Milosch, however, elbowed the Turks out of the greater part of Servia, but they retained the strong places. It was not the Tsar's business to clear Turkey out of Servia for the benefit of the Servians ; and although he was petitioned on the point, he was deaf to the prayer. Worse : he stirred up strife between Milosch and his comrades, thus pursuing the policy of creating divisions, and so keeping Servia weak while keeping Russian influence alive. Milosch consulted the British Consul at Belgrave, and Russia thereupon decided that the time had arrived for his deposition. "She effected this by the stale device of a constitution. Milosch was a personal ruler—such a ruler entirely suited the temper and condition of the Servian people. Their civilisation was not sufficiently advanced to require a constitution. At the instigation of Russia the Porte presented its vassal Servia with a constitution. Nothing more monstrous or more ludicrous could be conceived. Russia and Turkey, two barbarian States with nothing in common but their own misgovernment, concocted a constitutional draught for little Servia, a country in perfect health if her self-constituted physicians would only have left her alone. This constitution did the work it was meant to do ; for it checkmated Milosch."

MURDERED BY "CONVICTS."

Milosch was forced to resign. To him succeeded his son Michael. Michael was too patriotic to suit Russia, and in 1842 was dismissed in favour of Alexander Karageorgevitch, a feeble man, and a creature of Russia. In course of time, however, he displayed, or rather, was accused of displaying, a partiality for Austria ; Russia arranged riots at Belgrade ; Alexander was sent to the right-about ; and Milosch was brought back. He died in 1860, and was succeeded by the Michael who was deposed in 1842. A gifted Sovereign, he was murdered in the park of Topchidera, near Belgrade, it is commonly affirmed, by convicts. These convicts, however, operated with the connivance of the Governor of the gaol, a notorious partisan of the Karageorge family, who were notorious partisans of Russia. The Governor was executed ; Russia, his master, retains the confidence of the peace-loving and humanitarian world ; and the Karageorges were for ever forbidden by the Servian authorities from entering the country of their origin. A Karageorge now sits on the Servian throne. But the story of the crimes committed by Russia against Servia is a long one. We must defer its conclusion to another chapter.

XII.—MORE OF RUSSIA'S SERVIAN VICTIMS.

If she still attracted the attention of the world, civilised and barbarian, it was scarcely by the exhibition of any grand moral qualities : her annals were one long record of vicious luxuries, servile flatteries, intrigues, disaffection, and cruelties, which grew like an unhealthy crop of fungi in an atmosphere charged with the gases of theological dogmatism." So writes one of the latest historians of Russia, Mr. Hector Munro, of the Empire as it existed in the ninth century. And what was true of it in the ninth century was true of it in the nineteenth, and is true of it in the twentieth. "Turkey never changes," said the late Prince Lobanoff to the British Ambassador during the Armenian agitation. The same may be predicated of Russia.

THE RISING IN BOSNIA.

Amongst the other fraternal acts performed by the Tsardom in regard to Servia was that of causing the war of 1876. The tendency of the minor Slav States since their emancipation has been to lean on Constantinople. They know their Russia : they fear Austria ; but they believe they can, to borrow Mr. Cecil Rhodes's expression, "deal with" the Sultan. Stambouloff's policy aimed, *inter alia*, at securing closer relations between Bulgaria and Turkey. Even now, in the height of the Macedonian ferment, Sofia is trying to negotiate directly with the Yildiz Kiosk. Servia sought to do the same when the rising occurred in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The sympathy of the Servians with the rebels was naturally very great. Both spoke a common language, sang the same songs, and had a common origin. The Servian Minister at Paris was a native of the Bosnian capital, Serajevo ; and the parents of M. Ristitch, who so long guided the destinies of Servia under Milan Obrenovitch, were Bosniaks. Servian families emigrated to Bosnia and Bosniak families settled in Servia. The two countries were to one another as the Cape Colony is to the Orange River Colony. With so close a connection between them, it was not to be supposed that Servia could remain an indifferent spectator of what was happening in Bosnia and Herzegovina. But Ristitch, who was then in power, and who was a statesman as well as a patriot, saw no necessity for fear. He had no desire to quarrel with the Porte ; he did not wish to weaken his own country ; and he had no ambition, he under-

stood the situation too well, to play the game of Russia. Something, however, had to be done. Ristitch, therefore, proposed to send a confidential minister to make representations to Turkey, and to suggest a peaceful solution of difficulties which threatened a general conflagration.

DELIBERATE DECEPTION.

There is good reason for thinking that the contemplated negotiations would have succeeded had they been allowed fair play. Turkey readily acquiesced in the idea, and announced her approval of the intended visit of the Servian negotiator. But to let the bonds uniting Turkey and her former vassal be strengthened, to allow it to be seen that Servia, unaided, could ameliorate the position of the Slavs of the revolted province, was the last thing Russia could tolerate. The arrangement must, therefore, be overthrown: and the easiest way to overthrow it, as it appeared to Russian statesmanship of the period, was to lie about the attitude of the Porte. Before the special Servian agent could arrive at Constantinople, the Servian Chargé d'Affaires there telegraphed to Ristitch that Sir Henry Elliott, the British Ambassador, said that if the envoy came with any request to the Porte, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs would not receive him. The envoy, accordingly, was recalled. Sir Henry Elliott had, of course, made no such statement as that attributed to him. The Servian Chargé d'Affaires had been misled by Ignatief, who told him that he (Ignatief) had heard Sir Henry Elliott make it.

PEACE EFFORTS SUPPRESSED.

War, however, did not immediately ensue. The lie worked well enough, but Ristitch was not at the end of his pacific resources. Since, as he believed, the Porte would not meet his special envoy, he decided to appeal to Europe. As a preliminary measure, one of the ablest and best informed of Servian diplomats visited Prince Nicholas of Montenegro, a Servian Prince ruling a Servian people, and came to a thorough understanding with him. It was arranged between them that Montenegro and Servia should each send a representative to the court of every Great Power in Europe to explain the impossibility of the situation in Turkey remaining unchanged, and that reforms in the revolted provinces were a vital necessity if peace was to be preserved. But this plan, which might have resulted in the preservation of the peace, was suppressed by the Russian Ambassador in Vienna; and Russia was left to pose as the sole protector of the Christian subjects of the Porte. The well meant efforts of Servian diplomacy having thus been frustrated by fraud, the way was open for the war-mongers of the all-pacific and human-

tarian Tsardom. General Tchernayeff, an emissary of the Pan-Slav Committee, reached Belgrade with 6,000 roubles, supplied by the then well-nigh omnipotent Aksakoff, of *Moscow Gazette* fame; Russia arranged the Bulgarian atrocities; and war ensued. Tchernayeff behaved as if he was the autocrat of Servia. Nikolitch, the Minister of War, threatened him with court martial for the insulting manner in which he treated distinguished Servian officers, and for the inefficient manner in which he conducted the campaign. The War Minister, however, was not strong enough to tackle the Pan-Slavic tool. He was compelled to resign and remained out of office for three years. "I do not wish," remarks a writer of the period, "to relate all that I have heard from Servian officers of high rank touching General Tchernayeff; suffice it to say that the emissary of the Moscow Committee did little to endear him to the Servian people. If Servia was brought to the brink of ruin by an intrusive stranger, she was restored to something like her former prosperity by one of her own sons."

UNDERMINING SERVIA.

And as it has been, so it is now. Russia hates Servia because Servia has manifested a determination to retain her independence at all hazards. Therefore, Servia must be weakened whenever possible. Russia hated the Obrenovitch dynasty, because it was under the Obrenovitch dynasty that every step forward was accomplished. Therefore the Obrenovitch dynasty must be got rid of; and got rid of it has been by the recent murder of the young King Alexander and his Queen. The installation of Peter Karageorgevitch and a Radical Ministry followed. And now it is the turn of Peter Karageorgevitch and the Radicals—Russia's friends, as we have been taught they are—to learn what Russian friendship means. As disturbing elements, no doubt there was Russian money and Russian patronage for them. But when they begin to govern the country to the best of their ability, they must reckon with Russian hostility; for what Russia says is that the country shall not be well governed as an independent State. Accordingly, we are already being told that "dissatisfaction with the Radical Government in Servia is steadily increasing;" that its foreign policy is adversely criticised; that it has no settled Balkan policy; and the rest—in brief, that it is a thoroughly "bad lot." It requires but a very slight experience indeed to detect the hand of Russia in all this.

XIII.—THE SACRIFICE OF FINLAND.

There is a general supposition that Russia's aggression upon the constitution and the liberties of Finland dates, as it were, from yesterday—that it began with the advent to power of the Tsar Nikolai Alexandrovitch and his agent Bobrikoff. That is a mistake. The Russian rulers who have sworn to respect the institutions of the Grand Duchy commenced to commit perjury, in intention or in deed, from 1809, when the Treaty of Frederichshamn took Finland from Sweden and bestowed it on Russia. So far back as 1862, we find a French paper remarking, apropos of the Polish question, which was then coming to the front, “The semi-official press of Paris has of late been supporting the complaints of Finland against Russia, as it has also supported the complaints of Poland. But the patronage which the press of Imperial France extends to Finland will have more immediate consequences, because Poland cannot count upon the aid of a Sovereign of the same nationality, whereas Finland has one in the King of Sweden.” Concurrently it was proposed to demand of Russia “the observance of the Treaty of Fredrichshamn, which guaranteed to the Finns their constitution.” It is evident, therefore, that half a century ago the Finns had grievances, and that they were due to the violations of the Treaty of 1809. The simple truth is that Russia never intended to respect that compact a moment longer than should be convenient to her. When she violates treaties with the whole of Europe, why should she observe a treaty with Sweden?

TO SCANDINAVIA THROUGH FINLAND.

But it is only recently that she has ventured to push her designs against Finland energetically and shamelessly before the face of the world. The Finnish constitution, Finnish liberties, Finnish progress, Finnish culture and Finnish enlightenment have always been standing offences in the eyes of the Russian bureaucracy; but the heads of the Government have not hitherto seen their way clear to barbarise the country. When suggestions to that end were offered to Nicholas the First, his reply was “Finland governs itself.” Nicholas the Second, an enormously feebler person, has been unable to give the same reply: and the Finns, of whom it has been written that “they never produced, in the Diet or out of it, a conspirator, or agitator against Russia,” have been deliberately converted into a nation of rebels. That, in the circumstances, is, of course, all to their credit. As Mr. Joseph

Fisher observes in his *Finland and the Tsars*, "the Finnish people may well claim that they have faithfully kept their part of the fundamental compact made with the Tsars; and, if after ninety years, they now find themselves attacked in the Russian press as rebels and conspirators, and plunged in a struggle for their political existence, they have a good right to claim that the fault is not theirs. Their crime has been that Finland and Finland's constitution stand in the way of the Panslavonic ideal—one Russia, one faith, one law, one tongue." It has been that and something more. An autonomous Finland was a bar to Russian aggression upon Scandinavia; and Scandinavia must be tackled before Russia can threaten England from the north-east.

THE GREAT HYPOCRISY.

As the Holy Alliance preceded the partition of Poland, and the Brussels Congress the massacre of the Yomud Turkomans, so the assault upon Finland was heralded by the so-called Peace Manifesto of Nicholas the Second, a document which, according to its illustrious author, was to prove, "by the help of God, a happy presage for the century that is about to open," and "a corporate consecration of the principles of Equity and Right, on which rest the security of States and the welfare of peoples." Those who know Russia expect some atrocity to follow an impious declaration of this sort. The Peace Manifesto had as its sequel the manifesto declaring war on the Finnish constitution, and hypocritically protesting that "in conformity with Our Crowned Forefathers, we see a guarantee for the advancement of Finland in the more intimate union of that country with the Empire." Those who are still inclined to believe a Russian protestation (when it emanates from a Tsar) may profitably consider what "Our Crowned Forefathers" had said previously with regard to Finland.

IMPERIAL PLEDGES.

Alexander the First assured Count Mannerheim that "he considered it an honour to rule over a free people, with laws of its own." At the Borga Diet of 1809 this assurance was renewed; Alexander himself arranged that Finnish affairs should be reported upon to him by the Governor-General of Finland, and not by Russian Ministers; he himself assumed the title of Grand Duke; and in other ways emphasized "the distinction between his functions as an autocrat in Russia and a constitutional ruler in Finland." Finally he signed the act of assurance, not inaptly designated Finland's Magna Charta. His pledge ran thus:—"We Alexander First, by the Grace of God Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russians, etc., etc., do make known that, Providence having placed us in possession

of the Grand Duchy of Finland, we have desired hereby to confirm and ratify the religious and fundamental laws of the land, as well as the privileges and rights which each class in the said Grand Duchy in particular, and all the inhabitants in general, be their position high or low, have hitherto enjoyed according to the constitution. We promise to maintain all these benefits and laws firm and unshakable in their full force. In confirmation whereof we have signed this Act of Assurance with our own hand." This was no simple concession. The promise had to be given before the oath of fealty was taken ; and, to add to the solemnity of the occasion, the Act was signed in a cathedral. Every succeeding Tsar has sworn the same oath in the same fashion. Copies of it hang in every Finnish church, and for almost a century "they have been pointed out by father to son as Russia's word of honour to Finland, and they are regarded—or were regarded until the proclamation of February the 15th, 1899, rendered them worthless—as the very foundations of the constitutional existence of Finland, placed by them 'in the rank of nations under the Empire of its own laws.'

CANADA'S GAIN.

Nicholas the Second, of course, swore the pledge with the rest. But that did not prevent him from breaking it, and from breaking it without the smallest excuse. History records no blacker act of perjury. At a moment when the Tsar was endeavouring to persuade his neighbours not to increase their armies or their expenditure on armaments, he himself was attacking Finnish liberties, with the object, amongst others, of swelling his soldiery by Finnish recruits. By this preacher of peace, too, the freedom of Finland was violated as a prelude to further acts of aggression on Norway and Sweden. That Russia contemplates the execution of that clause of Peter the Great's will relating to Scandinavia can be doubted by few acquainted with the subject and familiar with Russia's aims and policy. But knave as she is she is foolish too. Instead of securing the Finnish recruits she desired, she has sent them to Canada, thereby strengthening us to the same extent as she weakened herself. Of these most desirable emigrants the Dominion received 16,000 in a single year. The Finns are to be congratulated on the manner in which they have met the aggression of their perjured rulers. Keeping their indignation well under control, they have given the Muscovites no pretext for repeating in Finland the barbarities of Warsaw or the "Noyade" of Blagoveshchensk, and basing themselves on the last, and relying upon the sympathy of humanity, they have shamed the civilised world what Russia is in a manner more convincing than the talk has ever been accomplished before. Russia stands before us as the perjured nation, and she has no defence to offer. None her foreign friends do not attempt to palliate her crimes in Finland.

XIV.—RUSSIA'S BULGARIAN BRETHREN.

In "The Present State of Russia, written by an eminent person residing at the great Tsar's Court," and published in 1671, occurs a passage which suggests that Russia is not the only country that does not change. The "eminent person" was an English doctor named Collins, who went to the Russian Court shortly after the death of Ivan the Terrible, and lived there for nine years. Of his hosts he wrote:—"The Russians are of Solomon's opinion that money answereth all things. The generality of them are false, truce-breakers, subtle foxes, and ravenous wolves, much altered since their traffic with the Hollander, by whom they have much improved themselves in villainy and deceit. . . . The Hollanders render the English cheap and ridiculous by their lying pictures and libellous pamphlets, which make the Russians think us a ruined nation. They represent us by a lion with three crowns reversed and without a tail, and by many mastiff dogs whose ears are cropt and tails cut off." The Hollanders are now, as they were at the end of the seventeenth century, making us "cheap and ridiculous by their lying pictures and libellous pamphlets," of which even the leading ideas remain unaltered. As to Russia, that she is still what she was when the eminent doctor summed her up is demonstrated with disgusting clearness by her conduct in respect to Bulgaria. Indeed, a review of that policy tempts one to ask himself whether she has not further "improved herself in villainy and deceit."

A CHAPTER OF INIQUITY.

When Alexander the Second entered the field against Turkey, his agents having previously manufactured the Bosnian atrocities and engineered Servia into war, it was in the name of the most High and Indivisible Trinity, and in order to secure the liberation of his brother Slavs. We have already seen how the Servian branch of the fraternity have been and are being treated. The Bulgarians have fared even worse. Not for a moment since the signature of the Treaty of Berlin has Russia ceased to conspire against Bulgarian freedom; and she has not hesitated to stoop to the vilest methods of the militant anarchist to achieve her ends. She has forcibly stolen a Bulgarian sovereign; she has allowed her cities to be converted into hot-houses of anti-Bulgarian intrigue; she has sent her dynamitards into the country; and she has caused the assassination of Bulgaria's ablest statesman.

BULGARIA UNDER STAMBULOFF.

So long as Stambuloff was in the land of the living, Russia had in him her match. Although his task was most difficult, he managed to accomplish it; and as lately as the end of 1891 he was able to say to a friend: "You know the country. Well, if you ask me whether my Government has done well or ill during the past few years, I should reply by that one immortal word on the epitaph of the architect of the cathedral in London, 'Circumspice.' You will see incredible progress everywhere. The people are getting richer day by day. Savings banks are increasing in number. They contain already about a million pounds sterling. Public instruction makes steady and rapid progress. The army is in splendid order. We have 100,000 men on active service, ready to take the field in less than a fortnight's notice, and 100,000 reservists could follow a few days later. This involves a heavy pecuniary sacrifice, but it is rendered necessary by the fact that we have neighbours who are victims of Panslavist intrigues. I leave it to the military authorities of Europe to estimate how many hundred thousand men would have to be put in movement at Kisheneff to come and strike the Danubian frontier of the Empire. I leave also to European diplomats to consider what would be the situation if, by misfortune, Bulgarian policy were changed to the benefit of Russia. People must admit that all that the Bulgarian Government does to maintain order and unravel and confound the manœuvres of the Panslavists is to the profit of Europe as well as to that of our own country."

HACKED TO PIECES.

This was perfectly true. Russia knew it was true. She knew that Stambuloff was making Bulgaria strong; and, as a strong Bulgaria did not suit her book, she resolved to beat the Bulgarian Bismarck by foul means since she could not defeat him by fair ones. The seeds of distrust were sown between him and Prince Ferdinand, with the ultimate result that the statesman was compelled to separate himself from the Prince whose election to the throne he had procured, and whose battle against Russia he had fought so strenuously. Various attempts were made upon Stambuloff's life before he was really done to death. Major Panitza, a commander of sharpshooters in the Servian campaign, lent himself to one of these gallant efforts, was found out, and paid the penalty with his life. A year later, in the March of 1891, only an accident saved Stambuloff, the Finance Minister Beltoff receiving the bullet intended for his more celebrated colleague; and once again the indications pointed to St. Petersburg and Bucharest, in the latter of which Panalavism had established one of its murder holes. Stam-

buloff's friends were similarly dogged by assassins. His policy was close relations with the Porte, and the conduct of it was left in the very clever hands of Dr. Vulkovitch. Close friendship between Turkey and her vassal, however, was intolerable to Russia; and one fine day Dr. Vulkovitch was laid low, in the streets of Constantinople by a stab in the back. At last came the turn of Stambuloff himself. He was literally hacked to pieces, near his own house, in circumstances which are not yet sufficiently remote to have escaped the public memory.

FOLLOWING RUSSIA'S LEAD.

In addition to these individual murders, Russia sought to commit murders on the wholesale scale by forcing Bulgaria into war with Turkey. For this statement Stambuloff himself is our authority. "Their plan," said he, "was to push us forward at a given moment to attack Adrianople and Dedeagatch. We refused to play that rôle, and the Panslavists resolved to wreak vengeance on us, no matter by what means. In the name of liberty, we Bulgarians, who wish to contribute to the maintenance of European peace, ask Europe to help us in our aim." Unfortunately, the appeal was not answered as it ought to have been. The European Cabinets were then engaged, as they usually are, in doing Russia's dirty work for her. What Stambuloff meant was that the Powers should recognise Prince Ferdinand. There was no valid reason why they should not have done so. Whatever else he might have been, he was the choice of the Bulgarians and the selection of the Regency. Had he been recognized by the Powers, Russia would have had no option but to follow their lead or to remain isolated from that family of which she aspires to be regarded as a member. As it was, however, they held aloof, and, while following Russia's lead instead of compelling her to follow theirs, enabled the Muscovites to keep the young State in a condition of constant anxiety. As Stambuloff expressed it, "At present, from an international point of view, we are in an abnormal state, and our enemies are always free to cry out, *urbi et orbi*, that our present political position is only provisional and that sooner or later we must fall into the arms of Russia. To put an end to that, the Prince must be recognized. Then we should have a dynasty, which would be a guarantee for our independent existence." Such a guarantee, with that great deference for Russian susceptibilities which is one of the mysteries of Continental politics, the Powers withheld.

XV.—BULGARIAN ATROCITIES.

Greatly to the disgust of the St. Petersburg Government, the methods employed by Russia to manifest her affection for her Bulgarian brethren were exposed to the world by the publication, in the Sofia official Journal *Svohoda*, of a batch of documents communicated to it by one Jacobssohn. These papers were afterwards issued in Servian, in book form, and were later on to be published in Russian, German, French, and English. Whether this intention was carried out we do not know. The summary in our possession was compiled from the Russian originals.

THE POLICY IN BULGARIA.

As we have said, Russia, her protestations notwithstanding, never meant that the Bulgarians should be freed as the result of the victorious war of 1877-78. On the contrary, she fought for the conversion of Bulgaria into a Russian province and she said so at the convenient hour. Accordingly, shortly after the close of the campaign, a Russian Council of War commenced to hold sittings at Philippopolis. Its object was to determine what was to be done next in order to secure for Russia the fruits of her victory. The Council decided to fetter Bulgaria to her "liberator" in such a fashion that an independent existence for the newly awakened State should be an impossibility. So soon as a strong army, under the command of Russian officers, should be created in the principality, the union of Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia was to be proclaimed; and subsequently, by means of risings to be arranged in Macedonia and the Dobrudsha, these places were to be drawn into the combination, the whole of which was, as soon as might be deemed expedient, to be persuaded to enter into close relations with Russia. In other words, it was to form a kind of Southern Finland. This was the Russian plan; and its realisation constituted, and probably still constitutes, the grand aim of Russian policy in this quarter of the globe. Every Russian agent in the Balkans, from Dondùkoff-Korsakoff to Kaulbars, worked for the same end, and preached from the same ~~text~~—“The Tsar must be master in Bulgaria. His will alone is law.”

IMPUDENT MACHINATIONS.

Prince Alexander and his people were embarrassed by the novelty of their position. They had yet to learn the art of managing affairs. They had yet to discover the true character of their patron. Both sought to make the best of the situation, but by different means.

Differences of opinion arose : and there were misunderstandings on both sides. The Russian representatives and Russia herself were appealed to ; but the former, although they intervened frequently, failed to bring about a reconciliation when one was desirable in the interests of the liberated land. It was none of the business of these gentry to adopt any measure likely to strengthen Bulgaria. It was their business to weaken her, to destroy her self-confidence, and to create in her a sense of dependence upon another Power. To bring this about, the Russian Consulate was converted into the headquarters of the Parliamentary opposition : the various parties were embittered against one another in turn : until at last Prince and people saw through the game. Their eyes were literally forced open by the impudence of Russia's machinations.

THE TSAR'S INTERVENTION.

To get rid of the Prince then became Russia's object. The Russian Consul was instructed, in this sense. The Director of the Asiatic Department of the Russian Foreign Office, Melnikoff, wrote to the Consul at Rustchuk that General Obrutschef was very ill satisfied with Russian diplomacy in Bulgaria, as it did not seem to comprehend that Bulgaria had been conquered for Russia, and not for a German Prince. The anxiety of the General, however, was unfounded ; for the diplomatists had grasped the point. It appears from the exchange of telegrams and letters during this period, that Russian diplomacy, in spite of many a failure, succeeded in drawing its net more closely and yet more closely around the Prince. Suddenly, fresh orders were received. Russia had discovered another and better, if bloodier, method of ruining the young State. No doubt, she thought, it would succeed. An angry frontier-dispute had arisen between Bulgaria and Roumania. Prince Alexander, seeing the danger, and desirous of averting it, approached the King of Roumania personally, and an arrangement seemed probable. Then the autocrat of the great pacific Tsardom, the Tsar Pacifier, intervened with the following message :—"It is Bulgaria's right to stand on Arab Tabia." Simultaneously the Director of the Asiatic Department wrote a long despatch in the same sense to the Russian Consul at Sofia.

THE PRINCE'S DILEMMA.

The Prince was to betake himself to Copenhagen in order that the Tsar might dictate his policy to him. It was his Majesty's will that the territory in dispute should be wrenched from Roumania by force of arms. Bulgaria was to look to Russia for extra troops and for money, and was to demand, as the price of peace (after victory), the annexation of the Dobrudzha. In this fashion

Roumania would be enfeebled and humiliated: Bulgaria would be weakened and discredited; and Russia would become Bulgaria's frontier neighbour on the Danube. The Prince found himself in a *cul de sac*. If he rejected the Russian scheme, means would be taken to let his refusal be known in Sofia, in which case his abdication would become a certainty, since, with all their friendship for Roumania, the Bulgarians would not view with indifference the virtual declinature of the Dobrudscha. On the other hand, he would not declare war against Roumania because he had pledged his word to King Charles to let the frontier question rest. Russia became impatient; and the Russian Minister of War, Vanofiski, went so far as to order the Bulgarian War Minister, Kantakusin, to set the Bulgarian army on a war footing. Of all this the Prince seemed to know nothing. He mobilized the army, nevertheless, not against Roumania, however, but to assert the union of Bulgaria with Eastern Roumelia, where the revolution had just broken out. Russia was amazed and indignant. She wanted the union, but it was to be conceded by the gracious hand of Russia the Liberator. And she wanted war with Roumania. The Russian officers assembled at Rustchuk were officially asked what measures should be adopted in order to place the heads of the Bulgarian army in the most difficult position possible. They answered that they should be recalled, adding in response to another question, that in that event a war against Turkey or Roumania would be fruitless.

STABBING A FRIEND.

The scheme thus fell through. To grasp its full villainy, one must remember that Roumania was the Tsar's ally in the war against Turkey. She was more: she was his rescuer. It was the Roumanians under King Charles—under Hohenzollern leadership, that is to say—and not the Russians, who drove Osman Pasha from Plevna, and so opened the road to Adrianopole. It must further be remembered that Russia rewarded Roumania by filching from her Bessarabia, and forcing upon her the Dobrudscha in exchange. The Tsar, therefore, first robbed his ally by taking from her that which she desired to retain and forcing on her that which she did not wish to acquire, and then sought to recover the exchange by egging on Bulgaria to steal it as the price of Roumania's defeat in an unprovoked war. And at the same time Bulgaria was to be reduced to ruin in order that she might the more easily be absorbed by Russia. Such is Russia's statecraft. There is no describing its baseness. And yet Russia has her admirers, and even her advocates, in England; and they, too, are to be found chiefly amongst people who pride themselves on their morality.

XVI.—MORE ATROCITIES IN BULGARIA.

The story told by the Jacobsohn papers is by no means exhausted by the failure of the attempt to compel Bulgaria to make war on Roumania, in order that the Dobrudscha might be obtained for Russia. After the frustration of that barbarous scheme, the idea of removing the Prince was again adopted. The active agitation set afoot led, in the August of 1886, to Alexander's dethronement. Everybody is aware that this proceeding was solely Russia's work; but any doubt that might have existed on the point would be completely expelled by a perusal of the documentary evidence published a few years later.

KAULBARS THE GREAT.

Russia, however, was not content with the deposition of the Prince.* Her object was to reduce Bulgaria to a state of submission; and the persecution to which she had subjected the Prince was transferred to the Regency which followed his dismissal. This Regency, which was, in fact, a Stambuloff *régime*, was pronounced illegal by the Russian agents. Only the will of the Tsar, they said, was lawful. General Kaulbars, ironically nicknamed at the time Kaulbars the Great, rode about from place to place delivering this proclamation, releasing the Bulgarian army from the oath of fealty which it had sworn to the Regency, and expounding the doctrine that, after the trouble caused by the first Prince, who was of too childish a disposition to rule, it was not worth while to have a second. Would it not be better, suggested Kaulbars and his crew, to elect no prince at all, but to raise the Tsar to the dignity of the Grand Duke of the Balkans, and to beg him graciously to accept it. That, they explained, was the desire of the Tsar, and on his behalf, they guaranteed the permanence of the Bulgarian constitution. When we reflect that a similar pledge was extended to Finland by the Tsar in person, we can realise the value of the assurance given to Bulgaria by the horde of scoundrels who represented the St. Petersburg Government in the principality. The Bulgarians, and notably Stambuloff, let protestations of this kind fall on deaf ears, and Kaulbars seemed to weary of his work. He suddenly withdrew, and with him went the entire Russian ~~occupying~~ body. Bulgaria did not deserve Russian ~~occupying~~ guarding. The Foreign Office of St. Petersburg decided to transfer the ~~representation~~ of

Russian interests to the French consuls ; but, before this change could be effected, there came a counter-order entrusting the German consuls with the honour. This counter-order was issued on the express and personal order of the Tsar himself.

INTRIGUE FROM BUCHAREST.

A fresh phase of affairs was thus entered upon. The machinations against Bulgaria continued, but they were conducted from Bucharest, where the delightful M. Hitrovo was Russian Minister. This amiable creature, who was afterwards Russian minister in Japan, and who is now safely lying in his coffin, once expressed publicly his regret that the period when a man could rid himself of his opponent by the dagger or by the poisoned chalice had passed away—a circumstance which furnishes some clue to the weapons upon which he was likely to rely in the execution of his task. The Occupation Fund opened its coffers. Hitrovo and Company spent money freely, and were rewarded, here and there, by the appearance of a sham rebellion in Bulgaria. It began to be hoped in Russia that the unfortunate principality was bleeding itself to the verge of death, and would, ere long, fall fainting at the feet of the Tsar, and crave his mercy. But the gentlemen of the Asiatic Department were deceiving themselves, or, rather, were being deceived by their tools. Hitrovo's reports, which encouraged this optimistic sentiment, were always highly coloured, and depicted the situation, not as it was, but as Russia wished it should be. They created, nevertheless, an impression that Bulgaria was the victim of an acute crisis. Even the Roumanian Government was alarmed, and fortified their frontier against Russia ; while King Charles was spoken of as a candidate for the Bulgarian throne. If the King ever entertained the notion of offering himself as a ruler of Bulgaria, he discarded it in view of Russian threats that an invasion would immediately follow his candidature.

PRINCE FERNAND.

Meanwhile, a new era had opened in the Principality. Prince Ferdinand of Coburg had been discovered by Stambuloff, had been elected the successor of "the Battenburger," and had entered the State. Close upon his heels followed the Russian Government's proclamation that he was a usurper and an outlaw. A pause ensued. It did not last long, and then came renewed efforts to render vacant the Bulgarian throne. Prince Ganguim placed himself and his troops in the Balkan States as agents of this movement, and frank demands began to pour in upon the Sultanation and, in the very year of the Prince's arrival, Servioli, Stambuloff, and Pachaly were working together. The two were

Russians ; Panitza was a Bulgarian. In Novikoff Hitrovo found that he had greatly deceived himself. The man was always demanding money, and anything under 60,000 francs did not satisfy him. Kolobkoff and Panitza, on the contrary were earnest workers. They, too, needed money, however ; but the Occupation Fund was well off, and could meet not only their demands, but also those of Zankoff and his gang.

A BRILLIANT IDEA.

At this conjuncture, the bright idea of dynamite occurred to one or other of the conspirators. Others were using dynamite for the advancement of the causes they had at heart ; why should it not be used for securing that the Tsar's will be done ? To whom should be ascribed the merit of mooting the proposition will probably never be known. But it is certain that the infamy of endorsing it belongs to the Russian Foreign Office. Hitrovo wrote to the Director of the Asiatic Department that his instruments believed that, with the aid of a few dynamite bombs, they could reach their goal. It was in the nature of the case, he urged, that the strength of the war material should increase as the resistance increased. Blood was already flowing. The Rustchuk conspirators had been shot by order of a court-martial ; the Russian captain Nabukoff had been settled by the bullets of Bulgarian peasants ; and the Bulgarian Government was daily involved in similarly terrible proceedings. Stambuloff had learnt much. The Prince was determined to deal with the lawless with the utmost firmness. Strenuous measures were demanded. Dynamite was accordingly adopted. Russian secret police were posted on the Rustchuk-Varna railroad, and discovered the place where the Prince might best be blown into the air, train and all. Other Russian police agents were disguised as fishermen, and sent to Rustchuk to buy explosives. But the Bulgarian police were watchful. So were the Roumanians ; and these dastardly designs failed.

A DISGRACEFUL STORY.

We will not continue the history, which would disgrace a Central Asian Khanate. Nor shall we comment upon it. It bears its mark on its face. Only let it be remembered that Russia, at the very time when she was summoning conferences to consider how the world might best deal collectively with dynamitards, was herself employing dynamite against the ruler of a friendly and pacific state, and against her own brethren. We were on the point of denouncing Russia, the European Anarchist. But to say that would be to pay her too high a compliment.

XVII.—RUSSIA'S ANGLICAN FRIENDS.

Russia has always had her admirers in England, the freest of the world's free countries. She had them before she was found out, she had them after she was found out; and she has them now. Amongst them, no doubt, are friends of the sort which the Tsardom is, by Peter the Great's will, advised to create in every hostile community, a hostile community being any community which does not recognise the overlordship of the Tsar, and the friends being friends of the kind which can always be had by those able to command money. But, apart from men of this description, Russia has her sincere friends in the ranks of the various religious sects. It was the Quakers who went to the Emperor Nicholas prior to the Crimean war; it is the Dissenters who play the Russian game by attending meetings organised for the denunciation of States upon whose ruin the Tsardom is intent; and it is the High Church party and the Ritualists who hanker after closer relations with the Orthodox communion. Whether the last-mentioned are impelled by the impressive ceremonial of the Greek Church, by the gorgeous vestments of her priests, or by the authority her hierarchs exercise, it would be difficult to decide. Probably all three factors have their influence. But, however that may be, certain it is that, in spite of what has happened and is still happening, Russia is looked upon with a very sympathetic eye by the religionists of England.

THE STATE CHURCH'S SYMPATHY.

This is no new phenomenon. So far back as 1723 the desirability of a union between the Greek and the Anglican Churches was discussed; and although nothing came of it, the good feeling thus manifested remained undisturbed. In 1863 the Archimandrite Nilus, representing Constantinople and four patriarchates, visited London on behalf of the Greek clergy of the Danubian principalities; and in 1869 an English Prayer Book was sent to the Patriarch Gregory, who replied to the Archbishop of Canterbury, criticising some of the 39 articles. In the meantime, the Patriarch of Constantinople had flatly refused the invitation of the Pope to attend an Ecumenical Council to be held in 1869. The growth of the Greek Church had been encouraged in England. It was a Bishop of London, Henry Compton, who raised the money for the building of a Greek Church in Soho, circumstances from which Greek Street and Compton Street in that locality gained their names. The church because

Greco-Russian ; and when the Rallis came to England other churches were erected. Tractarianism had much liking for the Eastern rite ; and those who visited Moscow in 1896, on the occasion of the Coronation of the Tsar, will remember that marked consideration was shown to the Anglican divines who were present.

CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT INSTRUMENT.

What, then, is the Orthodox Church ? The question is well answered by Mr. Francis Palmer, who, in his *Russian Life in Town and Country*, says :—" For the great majority of the Russian people devotion to the Orthodox Church is by no means a matter of religion alone. . . . The Church means something beyond the creed that it upholds, and which individual members of it may or may not fully believe. It is not associated with dogma alone, but with a feeling akin to that with which the battleworn flag of an historic regiment is regarded by those whom it has led on to victory. Renunciation of the national church is, therefore, in the eyes of the bulk of the Russian people, not only an offence against their religion, but also an outrage to the most sacred symbol of the national victory over their alien oppressors—an insult to the nation itself. . . . The members of the Holy Synod are appointed by the Emperor alone, and consist of the three Metropolitans of Kieff, Moscow and St. Petersburg—the successive capitals of the Empire ; four or five archbishops and bishops ; and two representatives of the inferior clergy. The lay element is represented by the Procurator, and through him all real power is vested in the Emperor, as without his confirmation no act of the Synod is valid, and his confirmation is only granted with the sanction of the Tsar. Associated with the Holy Synod are the supreme ecclesiastical courts and a vast number of bureaux, through which all the affairs of the Church have eventually to pass." The Orthodox Church, therefore, is less a religious system than a govermental instrument. Peter the Great called the Procurator " the Emperor's eye " ; and that the Procurator may be the real Tsar we have learnt from the career of M. Pobiedonostseff. The Church is the mainstay of the autocracy. M. Pobiedonostseff knows this as well as any man, and better than most. He is for the maintenance of the autoocracy ; and, therefore, he stands up stoutly for the preservation of the rights, the powers, and the privileges of the Church to the full.

THE "EASTERN CHURCH ASSOCIATION."

The Church may or may not be suitable to Russia, her state of civilisation being what it is. M. Pobiedonostseff's persecutions may seem justifiable, and even necessary, in the eyes of his fellow-countrymen. But it is curious that freedom-loving Englishmen

should sympathise with an institution which proclaims boldly that "the will of the Emperor is the most literal expression of Divine Order transmitted to the earth, whose Imperial person is recognised as the living head of the State and of the Church, and whose decision no written word of the past can bind." Yet such sympathisers there are. In 1865 there was read before the Lower House of the Canterbury Convocation a report of a Committee on the subject of communications with a committee of American clergy relative to "Intercommunion with the Russo-Greek Church." It appears from this report that an association had been formed in England called the "Eastern Church Association," which numbered amongst its patrons the Archbishop of Belgrade, the Archbishop of Dublin, and several English bishops, with the object of informing the English public as to the state of the Eastern Churches, and to make known the doctrines of the Anglican Church to the Christians of the East. The committee announced that they had been favoured at one of their meetings "by the presence of the Very Reverend Archpriests Popoff and Warailieff, chaplains of the Imperial Embassies of Russia in London and Paris, from both of whom they received the most cordial assurance of personal co-operation."

INTERCHANGEABLE COMMUNIONS.

The Committee remarked that the action of Convocation in appointing such a body with such an object had been hailed with great satisfaction by the American Church, and added:—"It would be premature to lay down any principles or conditions on which it may seem to your Committee that such intercommunion as is contemplated may be brought about, further than this—to establish such relations as shall entitle the laity and clergy of either to join in the sacraments and offices of the other without forfeiting the communion of their own church; that any overtures towards such an object should be made, if possible, in co-operation with those Churches with which the Church of England is in communion; and that such overtures, whenever made, should be extended to the other eastern patriarchates, and not confined to the Russo-Greek Church. With this view, your Committee ask leave to sit again."

XVIII.—THE CHURCH TRAP.

Students of Russian policy have never experienced much difficulty in accounting for the various agitations in favour of the union of the Anglican and Russo-Greek Churches. The movement, they insist, originates with Russia, who, they say, takes advantage of the presence in the English Church of a small party of innovators who have been foiled in their attempt to draw closer to Rome, and " who seem to forget that, with the exception of celibacy of the clergy, the Russian Church possesses in a higher degree than the Latin Church what some have chosen to call 'the mummeries of superstition.' " Union being therefore impossible, Russia nevertheless seeks to gain her ends by letting it appear that she is disposed towards intercommunion, by which she may secure some sympathy with, or, at least indifference to, her maltreatment of her non-Orthodox subjects—the Catholics of Poland, for example, and the Protestants of the Baltic provinces and of Finland. In other words, she seeks to attain political ends by means of what appears to be an ecclesiastical but is in reality a political instrument.

FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE.

It cannot be too often repeated or too clearly comprehended that the Russian Church is just as much a part of the Russian Government as the dungeons of St. Peter and St. Paul or the Ministry of the Interior. Indeed, one might go further, and say, without much exaggeration, that the Church is the Government. The Holy Synod is the essential governing body as essentials are regarded in Russia; the Procurator is the Tsar's nominee; he is nominally the Tsar's servant; and he may be the Tsar's master. In any case he is responsible to nobody but the Tsar. During the past two reigns the policy of the Empire has been dictated by the Holy Synod through M. Pobiedonostseff. Its punitive powers over clergy and laity alike are enormous and terrible. M. Pobiedonostseff has assured us publicly that the Russian Church and Government permit "absolute freedom of conscience." It is a lie. If a member of the Orthodox Church should quit it and adopt some other creed, he renders himself liable to prosecution and, to severe punishment at the hands of the Ecclesiastical Courts. According to the Russian code, even a tendency to change is punishable. Change itself involves deprivation of civil rights, which means that the offender will be treated as dead, that his property will pass to his heirs, and that

he himself will be transported to a penitential colony. Should the friends of the "vert" fail to denounce him to the authorities, they are liable to severe punishment ; and so, too, is anyone—a Protestant pastor for instance—who dissuades anyone from entering the national Church.

A CASE IN POINT.

Mr. Francis Palmer, in his recently published work already alluded to, gives some examples of the manner in which Russia accords "absolute freedom of conscience" to her subjects. "A young peasant orphan girl had been taken charge of by a Roman Catholic lady of Polish descent, and brought up by her in her own faith. Many years afterwards it was alleged that one of her parents had really been a member of the Orthodox Church ; and she was consequently arrested and taken before the Ecclesiastical Court of the diocese, where, however, she absolutely refused to deny her faith. Fortunately the local courts are by no means insensible to the influence of money ; and her mistress, who was wealthy, succeeded in obtaining her release, to enable the village pope once more to try the effects of his eloquence upon her. Remaining obdurate, she was arrested upon several occasions, but each time with the same result." According to the Russian Code, all subjects of the Tsar are members of the Orthodox Church, if either of their parents belonged to the communion, or if any promise were given by the parents that the child should be made a member of the Russian Church.

COERCION AND ORTHODOXY.

"Another case that occurred in the same district ended more disastrously. A young peasant girl of Roman Catholic parentage, to escape the persecution of an agent of the estate upon which she was living, promised the village priest, in a document which she signed, that if he would use his influence to protect her, and she was enabled to marry the man to whom she was engaged, and who was also a Roman Catholic, all the children she might have should be brought up in the Orthodox faith. The bargain was agreed to ; but years after their children resolutely declined to carry out their part of the programme, or to take the sacrament of the Russian Church. Their father was consequently arrested, and sentenced to a term of imprisonment for failure to exert his authority. After several months' detention, he was released, it being admitted that his sons were evidently beyond his control. The latter, however, were deprived of their passports, so that they could not quit the locality ; they were placed under the supervision of the police ; and, at the present when the facts came to my knowledge, in 1896, they were threatened with arrest, and with deportation to a penitential colony.

In this case, before quitting their native parish, they would be compelled by force to take the sacrament in the Orthodox Church." Now, the fundamental principle of Russian government is uniformity. Every subject of the Tsar is *ipso facto* a Russian. He must speak the Russian tongue, must hold the Russian creed, and must conform to the Russian law. The great instrument for securing uniformity is the Holy Synod. It follows, therefore, that the Church is a political institution. Abroad, as at home, it is used for political purposes.

THE PROFESSIONS OF THE PATRIARCH.

It is curious, however, that this fact, so patent to ordinary observers, is not seen by Anglican Churchmen and by English Non-conformists. They accept Russia's assurances at their face value, and walk into the trap with the blindness of the average British statesman. The Convocation Committee concluded its report thus:—"Your Committee citing the words of the Venerable Patriarch and Synod of Constantinople, that 'the Orthodox Church of the East has never ceased to offer, with tears, fervent prayers to her God and Saviour, Who maketh of two One, breaking down the middle-wall of separation between them, that he may bring all churches into one unity, giving them sameness of faith and communion of the Holy Ghost,' conclude with the words of the prayer familiar to us all, 'That as there is but one body, and one spirit, and one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all,' so we may henceforth be all of one heart and one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

THE DESIRED IMPRESSION.

The *Church Times* expressed itself even more naively when the Servian Church was good enough to enter into communion with that of England. After saying that the Servian Church had emerged "from the fiery trial of persecution" into "a clearer sky" it observed:—"There are other Slavonic Churches in its neighbourhood, communion with whom is involved, in a measure, in communion with her, on whose neck the iron hoop of the Ottoman is still pressed, who are still sighing in the dungeon, and none hears their cry. They too are more intimately become our brothers in Christ, and by them we must do a brother's part. English churchmen, in future, will find it impossible to side with the Infidel and the Mahomedan against those with whom they have broken the Bread of Life and shared the 'Cup of Immortality.' Of course, this is exactly the sort of impression that Russia desires to produce.

XIX.—RUSSIA'S ADVANCE TOWARDS INDIA.

" We must advance as far as possible towards Constantinople and the (East) Indies. Whoever shall reign there will be the true master of the world. Therefore we must excite continual wars, sometimes with Turkey, sometimes with Persia, create dockyards on the Black Sea; take possession, little by little, of that sea, as well as of the Baltic, which is a point doubly necessary for the success of the project; we must hasten the downfall of Persia, penetrate as far as the Persian Gulf; re-establish, if possible, the ancient commerce of the Levant through Syria; and advance as far as the Indies, which are the emporium of the world. When once there, we can do without the gold of England " So runs the ninth clause of the will of Peter the Great. The author of this document, whether he was Peter or whether he was not, can scarcely have foreseen that the Indies would become a unified whole under the dominion of England. He wrote in the time of the Moguls, he saw before him only a series of semi-barbarous and mutually antagonistic communities whom to divide was to govern; and it is not altogether surprising that, in these circumstances, he should have regarded a gradual advance towards and the ultimate absorption of India as a perfectly practicable piece of Russian statecraft. Had he been able to foresee that India would become English before the Russian scheme could be executed, his opinion might have undergone a change. Be that as it may, the fact remains that his successors have diligently endeavoured to carry out his testimony in this as in other respects; and Russia's present operations in Northern China and in Manchuria are only part and parcel of her efforts to reach her final goal—" the emporium of the world."

DISMISSED DANGERS.

Apparently, this is not generally seen. People understand that when Russia has completed her Northern Asiatic railway system she will be able to exert great and even fatal pressure upon Peking; and the Chinese authorities have been repeatedly urged to remove their headquarters from the northern to the southern capital, Nanking. But ~~unhappily~~, setting aside Lord Curzon and his expert advice, seems to notice that the pressure applied to Peking could be exercised in a secondary degree to India. Russia at Peking—~~and~~ as far as she does not, of course, require to occupy the place—

would be as much on our right flank in India as she is on our left flank since her seizure of Merv and the construction of the line south from "the Queen of the World" to the Afghan frontier. But this, apparently, attracts little attention at home. Indeed, since the days of Lord Beaconsfield, the danger to which India is exposed by the encroachments of Russia in Asia seems to have been relegated to the limbo of things forgotten.

EUROPE'S OPPORTUNITY.

It is fair to admit that this is not the fault of Russia. She has worked steadily away in fulfilment of what she pretends to consider as her mission; and she makes no secret of her grand object. Hardly a day passes when somebody in Russia, journalist or soldier, does not discuss the invasion of India question. Russia got her chance in 1864, when, after the defeat of the Oubykhs and the emigration of the Caucasian tribes into Turkish territory, the Caucasus was subjugated. The land which these hardy and gallant mountaineers had striven for so many years in the face of Europe to defend furnished, so to speak, the springboard whence Russia could jump eastward; and, once in secure possession of it, she sprang. She has been springing ever since, slaughtering tribe after tribe, and swallowing up khanate after khanate, until now we find her mistress of the whole of Northern and Central Asia, knocking at the gates of Peking, the hostile neighbour of Japan, and even threatening Thibet. Europe had its chance as well as Russia. General Fadeyeff has confessed this. "When," he has written, "in February, 1863, the Grand Duke Michael was appointed Commander-in-Chief in the Caucasus, the aspect of things . . . was still far from promising immediate success. The resistance of the mountaineers had attained the highest pitch of energy, and there was no telling what might occur in the summer. . . . All our Western adversaries were busier than ever crossing our interests. At Trebisond, before the very eyes of our Counsul, a committee was formed for relieving the Circassians. All European Consuls, the Prussian alone excepted, were members of the committee, which was presided over by M. Podaiski, a Pole, acting as interpreter to the French Consulate."

A PERILOUS SITUATION.

"Anonymous benefactors sent to the Eastern shores of the Caucasus, powder, ammunition, rifled artillery, and all other provisions of war. At the instigation of the same party, the Circassians applied to the Powers for help against 'Russia Imperialism.' If we add to this that the Moslem population had at the same time been united in the entire Caucasus by religious propagation, promising speedy support; that the Polish insurrection was grow-

ing and expanding every day ; and that all Europe threatened to rise in arms against us, it will be obvious that we had no time to lose, but were obliged to finish the Caucasus at once, before it became too late." Had "all Europe," or even a single European Power, "risen in arms against" Russia, and prevented her from seizing the Caucasus, to which she had no more title than she had to Paraguay, the history of Central Asia would differ widely from that which is actually on record. Russia would not be where she is ; there would be little to fear regarding her influence on India ; and we should not stand in hourly dread of an outbreak of hostilities in the Far East. But Europe, as usual, remained blind to her own interests and to those of civilisation. No aid was extended to the Circassians ; Russia was allowed to drive them from their homes ; and the golden opportunity of staying the Eastern movement of the Muscovite glacier was missed. A similar blunder, or act of poltroonery, was committed when Poland was deserted. Russia, as Fadeyeff says, "finished the Caucasus at once, while there was time."

RAPID HISTORY MAKING.

Being thus presented by Europe with two indispensable *points d'appui*, Russia made history at a great rate both to the west and to the east. She broke off relations with the Vatican, in order that she might the more conveniently persecute the Catholic clergy of Poland ; she issued the three decrees for the abolition of the remnants of Polish nationality ; she ordered the use of the Russian language in the Baltic provinces ; she suppressed the separate interior government of Poland ; she interdicted the use of Polish in public places ; she incorporated with the Russian Empire the Baltic provinces, which formerly enjoyed provincial federation with a Governor, the last functionary to occupy the post being Bagratim ; and she repudiated the Black Sea clauses of the Treaty of Paris. In the East, the immediate sequel to the sacrifice of the Circassians was the establishments of the new Central Asian provinces of Turkestan. Then came the Bokharan war, carefully prepared in advance, and waged for some time with varying results, but finally culminating in the success of the aggressors and in the capture of Samarkand by General Kaufmann on May the 26th, 1868. This was followed by the expedition to Khiva, resulting in the surrender of the tribes in the July of 1873. Next the Turkomans were tackled, and defeated at Tschandyr in the same year, at the end of which a new Treaty with Bokhara was published. Two years later, the men of science whose curiosity proves so valuable to the Tsardom were seized with regret that the blessings of civilisation should be so long withheld from Khokand.

KAUFMANN AT KHOKAND.

The notorious Kaufmann was sent to teach the Khokandians whrt those blessings were ; and he began by slaughtering some 30,000 of them, more or less, on the 4th of September, 1875. It was announced that the Khanate, a tributary of China by the way, for whose internal condition Russia was in no sense responsible, had been "virtually subdued;" but the 21st of September saw Kaufmann still dealing out threatenings and slaughter, and in October the people expelled the new Khan which the Russian civilisers had set up. This sort of thing went on until the early part of 1876, when Khokand was formally annexed to Russia as Ferghana. Subsequently Kaufmann amused himself by trying to find out the road to India *via* Balkh ; and Lazareff, Lomakine, Tergukasoff, and others devoted themselves to the suppression of the Tekki Turkmans—an operation which cost the Russians dearly, but which ended at last in the submission of the tribes to Skobelev in 1881. Three years later, Komaroff effected the surrender of Merv ; and in 1885, the same enterprising general exerted himself to the utmost, by unprovokedly attacking an Afghan encampment, to bring about a conflict with the Ameer, if not with England. The English Government prepared for war with great energy, and was strongly supported by the Colonies and by the Indian native princes. But its head was Mr. Gladstone ; he naturally suffered from blood-guiltiness at the critical moment ; and the upshot of the business was that Cossack and Afghan face one another on the Ameer's frontier.

A REMARKABLE PROPHETY.

We will conclude this all too inadequate survey with a remarkable prophecy, written in 1858 :—"The fact is that if Russian progress goes on at the same rate and with the same energy and consistency as during the last 25 years, we may expect to hear them knock at the gates of India within 10 or 15 years. Once across the Khirgiz steppe, they get into the comparatively well cultivated and fruitful regions of south-eastern Turan, the conquest of which cannot be disputed to them, and which may easily afford for years, without effort, an army of 50,000 or 60,000 men. Such an army, in ten years, could completely subdue the country, protect the construction of roads, the colonization of a vast extent of land by Russian Crown peasants (as is done now on Lake Aral) overawe all surrounding States, and prepare the base and line of operations for an Indian campaign. We defy any military man who has studied the geography of the country to deny it. And if we are right in this, then the struggle of the Cossack and the Sepoy will not occur, as was expected, on the Oxus, but on the Cabul and the Amur."

XX.—IS RUSSIA'S ADVANCE INEVITABLE?

The reader of the foregoing articles, if he accepts the statements contained therein, should have little difficulty in answering the question, "Is Russia improving, or does she remain the brutal, barbarous, unscrupulous and lawless State which she was when Peter the Great had placed her on a firm footing, and given her a window out of which she could gaze upon European progress?" Russia's crimes—her barbarity, her chicanery, her insolent disregard of international law, her hypocrisy and her cruelty—are universally admitted. Indeed, they can be neither denied nor defended by any intelligent person. But it is urged by the apologists whom the statesmanship of the Tsardom takes care to secure for itself in every civilised community that the methods adopted by Russia for the attainment of her ends are no worse than those which have been pursued, at one time or another, by all great Powers, and that atrocities as heinous as those with which Russia is now reproached were committed by France, for instance, in the days of Richelieu and Mazarin, and by Italy in the period of the Borgias. Those who employ this plea, however, present their opponents with the whole of their case. It is precisely their point that Russia now is pretty much what the European nations were in the dark ages, and that she is no further advanced in civilisation than England was in the time of Edward the Black Prince.

UNCHANGED BARBARISM.

Further, they declare, and facts support them, that she makes no progress in civilisation, and that, as Prince Lobanoff averred of Turkey, she "never changes." Her methods are what they were a century or more ago. During the intervening period, the rulers of Russia, have distinguished themselves by the assiduity with which they have preached peace, humanity, and the golden rule. They have done this, not only because they were impelled by the gentle sentiments animating them, but because they were the heads of the Christian country, the only Christian country, of the world. In pursuit of their ambitions, however, they have had recourse to the sword, the bayonet, the knout, the dragonnade, the noyade; they have lied, they have cajoled, and they have entered into engagements only to break them. Do they act differently now? The present Tsar has followed faithfully in the footsteps of his predecessors. We have had the Tsar Liberator, who enslaved and massacred the Central Asian races. We have had the Tsar Pacifier, who perpetrated the war with Turkey. And now we have the Tsar Disposer, who has subjugated the Finns in order that he may prey upon ~~Finland~~, and who ~~now~~ is responsible for the suppressed, ~~and~~ ~~overreached~~, for the Christians ~~Christian~~ ~~Christian~~ in the ~~now~~ ~~now~~ the no less ~~overreaching~~ condition of subjection in the ~~now~~ ~~now~~ ~~now~~.

THE DANGER SIGNAL.

Plus ça change plus c'est la même chose." Now, as of old, as ever, we find Russia preaching peace and promoting war; claiming to march at the head of civilisation, and destroying wherever she can liberty, which is the essence of civilisation. Not to go too far back, we find her, while pretending to be the friend and protector of the Southern Slavs, egging them on to their ruin, nay, insisting that they shall pursue such courses as shall render their destruction inevitable. We find her, for instance, seeking to compel Bulgaria to go to war with Roumania reason or none; and, when that attempt fails, setting Servia and Bulgaria at each other's throats. We find her arming the Montenegrins, who know very well how to take care of themselves, and stirring up treasonable demonstrations amongst the Croatians, happy and prosperous subjects of Austria-Hungary. But for Russia's schemes of universal domination, but for her restless and unscrupulous efforts to aggrandise herself, the aims which the Tsar professed to hold dear in his Disarmament Rescript, and which his predecessor professed to cherish at the Brussels Congress of 1876, might have been realised long ago. Russia is the danger signal. She it is who keeps the rest of mankind on the *qui vive*.

THREATENING THE WORLD

The storm-clouds on the political horizon, some huge and lowering, others no bigger than a man's hand, and scarcely discernible by the expert, are entirely of Russian production. Why do men glance anxiously at their broad sheets every morning, lest they should read news of the outbreak of hostilities in the Far East? Is it because some Power or group of Powers is threatening Russia? Is it because the Tsardom is compelled to stand at the "present" in consequence of an impending attack from without? No. It is because Russia is herself threatening the world, and obliging the world to assume the defensive. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same is true of South-Eastern Europe. By the short-sighted the situation there is ascribed to the misrule of Turkey. But the misrule of Turkey is as nothing in comparison with the misrule of Russia. The condition of Macedonia is, speaking generally, superior to the condition of Russia. Macedonian discontent is local, simulated, artificial. It is not shared by the Turks, by the Servians, by the Greeks, or by the Wallachs. It is the invention of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Committee, the invention of the Tsardom. Russia has latterly pretensions at the extreme demands of the Revolutionary Committee who, by writing *against* all the other subjects to the Tsar, demanded, and by *negotiations* afterwards, that *now* that the Committee should be obliged to proceed to *negotiations*,

CIVILISATION'S REMEDY.

What is to be done with this "Scourge of God"? How is civilisation to protect itself against this tidal wave of reaction? There are those, in England and other countries, who are simple enough to believe, as Mr. Cecil Rhodes believed of the Mahdi, that Russia can be "dealt with." She is to be placated; she is to be negotiated with; she is to be treated as though some of her demands, that for a warm water port for instance, were legitimate. But, surely, that plan has been tested often enough to show its futility. When has Russia entered into an engagement except to break it? What is the matter in the Far East except Russian duplicity? Lord Salisbury tried the placating and negotiating plan in the case of Port Arthur; and his reward was to be diddled and insulted. What is the use of negotiating treaties with a Power which has proved over and over again, which, indeed, is never tired of proving, that no value whatever can be attached either to her word or to her bond? A treaty between Russia and another State is merely a snare for the honest party to the compact. It is worse than waste paper. Russia is to be dealt with by civilisation only as civilisation deals with other marauders and assassins. To her cunning civilisation must oppose its force; and, this done, the solution of the Russian difficulty would become much easier than is commonly imagined. For offensive purposes, at any rate, the power of Russia is absurdly exaggerated. Although she is territorially homogeneous, her huge size is her weakness, since she cannot defend all of her vulnerable points, and she cannot tell before hand which of these points will be attacked in a defensive or offensive campaign provoked by herself.

THE NECESSITY OF OPPOSITION.

Another source of weakness is her Chauvinism. Russian troops have fought well under German leadership; but Pan-Slavism has eliminated German leadership from the Russian army. In this respect the directions of Peter the Great have not been observed. Under Russian leadership the Russian army has not specially distinguished itself. It was repeatedly defeated in Central Asia; and it was beaten by the Turks in the last war. It was the Roumanians under German leadership who saved for the Tsar the situation before Pleven. Russia has been checked even by China, and would be checked again, and effectually, were there less corruption and less cowardice in Peking. And if the Peace is maintained in the Far East, it will be because of the unyielding attitude adopted and maintained by Japan, and not because of Russia's pacific protestations. The truth is that the sword is not Russia's favourite weapon, except, indeed, where helpless women and children have to be slaughtered indiscriminately with the lie and the bribe; and when these prove insufficient, and she is reluctantly opposed, she retreats—retires the more tamely because she has no sense of honour. If Europe is not to be Chauvinistic, opposed she will have to be sooner or later, and the sooner the better for humanity and for civilisation.

XXI.—RUSSIA'S INTERNAL CONDITION.

According to the theories of the Tsardom, Russia is the Power divinely appointed to put the rest of the world right. As Attila was the "scourge of God," so she is Providence's civiliser. Civilisation, however, like charity, begins at home, and it is worth while asking what sort of civilisation Russia has established for herself. We judge a tree by its fruits. What are the fruits borne by the Russian plant? Does it yield grapes or thorns, figs or thistles? There are few intelligent persons, in or out of Russia, who would answer these questions save in one way. Mr. Edmund Noble has shown that the tendency of Russian life, so far from being progressive, is really reactionary. Thus, "the native cookery," he points out, "is of the simplest. The people for the most part eat bread without butter. In 'table manners,' the Russians are fond of excelling. Yet, under special circumstances, two persons, falling to with fork, may eat out of a single plate without committing any breach of social propriety. This survival has a smack of Atavism about it, since in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, as mentioned by Mr. Kostomaroff, it was the custom to seat guests at table at the rate of two to a plate." We may add, as the result of personal experience, that even at good hotels, as hotels go in Russia, one knife, one fork, and one spoon, are considered sufficient for all the courses; and we have seen a waiter take a knife which had been used for fish, and had on that account been rejected, wipe it on the table-cloth, and return it to the guest. "The Russian habit of sleeping after meals has a still higher historical justification. That severe code of domestic morals, the *Domostroi* expressly warns the guest not to remain too long, in order that the host's post-prandial siesta may not be interfered with."

A SORT OF ATAVISM.

And as it is in the home, so it is in religion. "A sort of atavism," writes the author already quoted, "is noticeable in nearly a few of the sectarian articles of faith. We see the dissenters falling back, inconsiderately enough, to the dogmas—religious, social and political—of the early Slav life. The *Obshcheye* (commune) became a purely communistic doctrine. Every mir that joined it was merged with erected into a organisational unity, the members of which enjoyed all property in common under the administrative direction of 'active species,' regularly chosen from the people. The *Obshcheye*

believe in and inculcate the equality of all men, exacting from members of the sect a pronounced fraternal and philanthropic activity. Regarding commerce for profit as sinful, they trade with each other by a process of simple exchange. Land, water, and cattle they regard as the property of all men in common, and as incapable of being transferred in inheritance. The popular character of early Slav legislation finds an echo in the Stundists' practice of settling all disputes amongst members *inter se*, sometimes with the aid of an elder temporarily invested with judicial functions. In the principles of the Dukhobortsy, who hold that all men are equal, and that children ought to have the same consideration and reverence paid to them as that shown to adults and the aged, we catch a glimpse of old Slav life, with its recognition of personal worth and individual rights. This sect disbelieves in a future life, asserting the *post mortem* migration of the soul either into another body or to some far off planet—a partial reversion to the old Slav dogma that after death the soul sometimes journeyed to sun or moon. In the case of not a few fanatical sects, a truly pagan scorn of marriage has wrought not a little injury to morals; at times some of the heretical dissenters link themselves in their atavism with the erotic orgies of the ancient world."

EDUCATION.

A criterion of Governmental merit is the educational status of its subjects. What is the educational status of the Russians? Russia pretends to be favourable to the spread of education, both elementary and higher. She maintains a Minister of Education; she establishes universities, and claims a great name for them; and she sets up village schools. Schools are also maintained by the Agricultural Department, by the Ministry of Marine, and by the Ministry of War; and there are, besides, the schools of the associated charities known as the Institutions of the Empress Marie. Yet the educational status of the country is as nearly as may be a minus quantity. The peasants are absurdly ignorant, and, as a consequence, grossly superstitious. Of the total population, town and country taken together, only some 3 per cent. of the population can read or write. This is because the pretence of zeal for popular instruction, like all Russia's protestations, is a sham. The Tsardom is afraid of education. If it establishes a university, it is only in order to shut it again as soon as may be. Riots are got up amongst the students; and, of course with the utmost regret, the authorities are compelled to close the institution, and at the same time to deport the ring-leaders of the disturbances. Two objects are thus accomplished: an educational establishment is nullified, and young men with a thirst for knowledge are stowed safely away in Siberia. Thanks to the arrangements of the late Count Tolstoi, those students who are

permitted to continue their studies gain nothing more than an acquaintance with the classics and a good grounding in the theology of the Holy Synod. They are great at prohibiting in Russia; and the Holy Synod, in whose charge all educational institutions are placed, has certainly succeeded in prohibiting popular enlightenment while maintaining an educational machinery—while pretending to be earnest about the education of the Empire. As a result, Russia remains the solitary wholly illiterate State in Europe. Even in the great cities, such as St. Petersburg and Moscow, the shopkeepers find it useless to proclaim their lines in Cyrillic letters. Not three persons out of every hundred can read them. Wherefore recourse is had to pictorial signs. The man who sells vegetables puts outside his shop a rude painting of cabbages, carrots, and turnips; the man who deals in hats exposes a picture of those articles; and so forth. It is idle for the non-Russian-speaking visitor to a Russian town to write the address of his hotel on a piece of paper, thinking that, should he miss his way, he can show the writing to a *droshky* driver, who will take him to his destination. The *droshky* driver cannot read. He cannot write. Looking at the situation broadly, nobody, outside official circles, can read or write. The Russian nation is a nation of ignoramuses, the products of a cunning absecurantism.

A DISCONTENTED PEOPLE.

The Tsardom will not regard the first portion of this statement as a reproach to itself. It is, on the contrary, a compliment, since it is an admission that the Government has been successful in its educational policy. That policy is to withhold education, in the expectation that an ignorant people will remain subservient to the autocratic system, against which an educated people would revolt. Here, again, the Tsardom is to be congratulated. The expectation has been realized. There is no popular agitation against the autocracy in Russia, nor is such a movement likely. But this does not mean that the Russians are a contented people. So far from that being the truth, Russia is notoriously, not only the most ignorant, but the most politically discontented, the most socially disturbed, and the most internally threatened of European States.

Russia, we repeat, is the most discontented State in Europe, if not in the world. Her discontent, unlike German discontent, is not confined to certain strata of society, nor does it affect only certain administrative phases. It is universal. It embraces all classes, and affects almost every domain of human activity. There is religious discontent, economic discontent, political discontent; and these discontents are the more dangerous since all manifestation of them is, as far as may be, repressed. Nor are they of recent date. Mr. Edmund Noble, in his *Russian Revolt*,

published in 1885, remarks, "No reader of Russian history need be reminded that the growth of Russia the Empire did not really begin until Russia the country had been forced into receiving a ruler of the Byzantine type to replace the prince elected in popular assembly as servant and not master of the people. The moment autocratic power was established in Russia, that moment the Russian Empire began its movement of expansion. From the beginning to the end of the sixteenth century, a period which represents the first hundred years of absolutism and centralisation in Russia, the territory of the Empire was quadrupled. Since the beginning of the seventeenth century it has increased from three millions to eight millions of square miles, in round numbers. Starting from the nuclei of her national life at Kieff, Novgorod, and Moscow, Russia has extended her borders northward and eastward and southward until she presents to the startled geographer and politician a continuous territory equal in surface to that which the moon turns to the earth. And the expansion has been wrought, not by the Russian people themselves, but at the expense of the popular liberties; not owing to the sympathetic acquiescence of international spectators, but by the sacrifice of the interests, and by overriding of the resistance, of protesting nationalities." Russian aggression starts, then, with Russia the Empire. And so does Russian discontent. Russia the Empire is more aggressive now than ever. Her discontent is also now greater than ever.

THE LAND AND THE NOBILITY.

It is remarkable that the chief measures of the Government intended to abate the hostile feeling of the people have served only to exacerbate it. The emancipation of the serfs by Alexander the Second, lauded as a grand and beneficent act, was to have improved Russian agriculture, and to have secured for the Tsardom at least prosperous and contented rural regions. In point of fact, the rural regions are the most distressed and the most discontented of any part of Russia. The nobles who formerly held the land have been ruined; while the peasants who gained it are naked and starving, the victims of extortion, of famine, and of pestilence. It was assumed by the Government that the nobles, who received enormous sums by way of compensation for the loss of their serfs, would spend the money in developing on scientific principles the land that was left to them, and in once setting a good example to the peasants, and employing a large number of them on the soil. Nothing of the sort happened. The Russian noble is not proud of his connection with the land. To him agriculture is a master's occupation, and he is ashamed of it—ashamed to have it known that he has visited his estates. Many of the nobles squandered their capital at Monte Carlo and elsewhere; others invested it in industrial concerns started by German, French, and other speculators, and in mining enterprises.

Very little of it reached the land. As a result, the peasants, the great majority of the Russian nation, found themselves worse off than before. Unable to find employment on the estates of their late masters, they were compelled to seek a means of livelihood in the factories ; and although Russian industries are protected to the verge of prohibition, and the proprietors of the enterprises earn high dividends, the workmen are apportioned only starvation wages. " Happily," writes Mr. Francis Palmer, in his recently published *Russian Life in Town and Country*, " most of the working classes, being peasants as well, are to a certain extent provided for by their land, so that whatever they earn beyond, however little, is so much gained. The land endowment of the peasantry has, therefore, had the unexpected result of acting as a subsidy to manufacturers, by rendering it possible for labourers to be obtained for wages upon which the workers could not even exist if wholly dependent upon them."

A TORRENT OF SOCIALISM.

But it had another strange result, which, whether expected or unexpected, is of the utmost importance to the supporters of the Tsardom. It created for Russia a proletariat. Now, a proletariat offered to the opponents of the existing régime the very material for which they were waiting. They were quick to avail themselves of their opportunity. Travelling about the rural districts was a slow and costly method of propaganda, and it was all but fruitless, since the doctrines enunciated by the visitors were directed against the Tsar, to whom the peasantry are intensely loyal. But when workmen were drafted into St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kieff, and Odessa in hundreds of thousands, with their intellects sharpened by town life, and their indignation stirred by the contrasts presented between the extremes of luxury and poverty, a thousand or more of them often congregated in a single factory free to exchange views, the task of the agitators became simple. They dropped their purely political propaganda, and substituted an economic one for it, acting in this respect on the advice of the chiefs of the German Social Democratic party. These tactics succeeded far beyond the anticipations of their authors. A peasant-workman, who would not listen to a single word against his " little father," hearkened eagerly to the suggestion that there must be something radically wrong in a system which permitted him and his fellows to starve whilst his employer was rolling in the lap of luxury as capacious as that yielding by dividends of cent. per cent. He could understand, too, that never rested with the many, and that the many could put wrong right if they chose to exert their strength. A single teacher could evangelise a whole factory in a day, for immediately he opened his mouth he had auxiliaries. More than that, while working in the towns he

was also working in the country ; for his disciples carried their newly-acquired ideas from the factory into the village, where they were readily absorbed. This change was effected in 1896. Seven years have elapsed ; and Russia, town and country, has become a hot-bed of militant and uncompromising Socialism. We are allowed to learn very little of what happens in Russia. But the window St. Petersburg is one which can be looked into as well as out of ; and sanguinary Socialistic riots—strikes as they are called—have been fought out in St. Petersburg before our eyes. They are mere samples of what is occurring all over industrial Russia. To-day it is Kieff, to-morrow it will be Moscow, the next day it will be Kasan. And so on. And as the economic condition of Russia goes from bad to worse, the Socialist torrent will gain in intensity.

A FEDERATION.

With what result ? More than one keen observer has predicted that the Russian Empire would, sooner or later, become top heavy, and break up into fragments. Mr. Noble, assuming that what the Russians desire is a federation of Slav States, and writing before the Socialist movement began, says :—“ The issue of the revolt is no longer of a partisan or even of a merely national character ; it becomes of immense significance for Europe. It is no less than this : Shall this vast empire, drawing from tyranny at home its means of aggression abroad, go on in its present path of expansion for a period, and with results to which limits cannot even be suggested ? Or shall the Russian people, breaking up into peaceful federations, and drawing from recovered popular rights the means of a prosperous internal development, devote themselves thenceforward to a policy of concession at home and non-interference abroad ? The revolt is the foe of imperial aggrandisement. A stationary Russia under absolutism is an impossibility. Retrogression means ruin to imperial interests. The natural and normal policy of the empire is thus one which makes Russia a constant menace to Europe.” And he adds that absolutism is doomed in Russia, and advises it “ to spread its dissolution, after the manner of certain financial operations, over a number of years.” Others think that the Tsardom will wind up in the midst of a sudden convulsion compared with which the first French revolution will appear a trifle. We indulge in no prophecy. But it is a fact that the internal condition of Russia now very much resembles that of France before the Revolution, and is such that nothing which might happen would greatly surprise us.

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